

American Girl®

September/October 2000

www.americangirl.com \$3.95

A Mini Mag
Inside

The winner
of the Halloween
game

Sneak a Peek at the **Olympics**

Spooky Kooky **Halloween** Getups

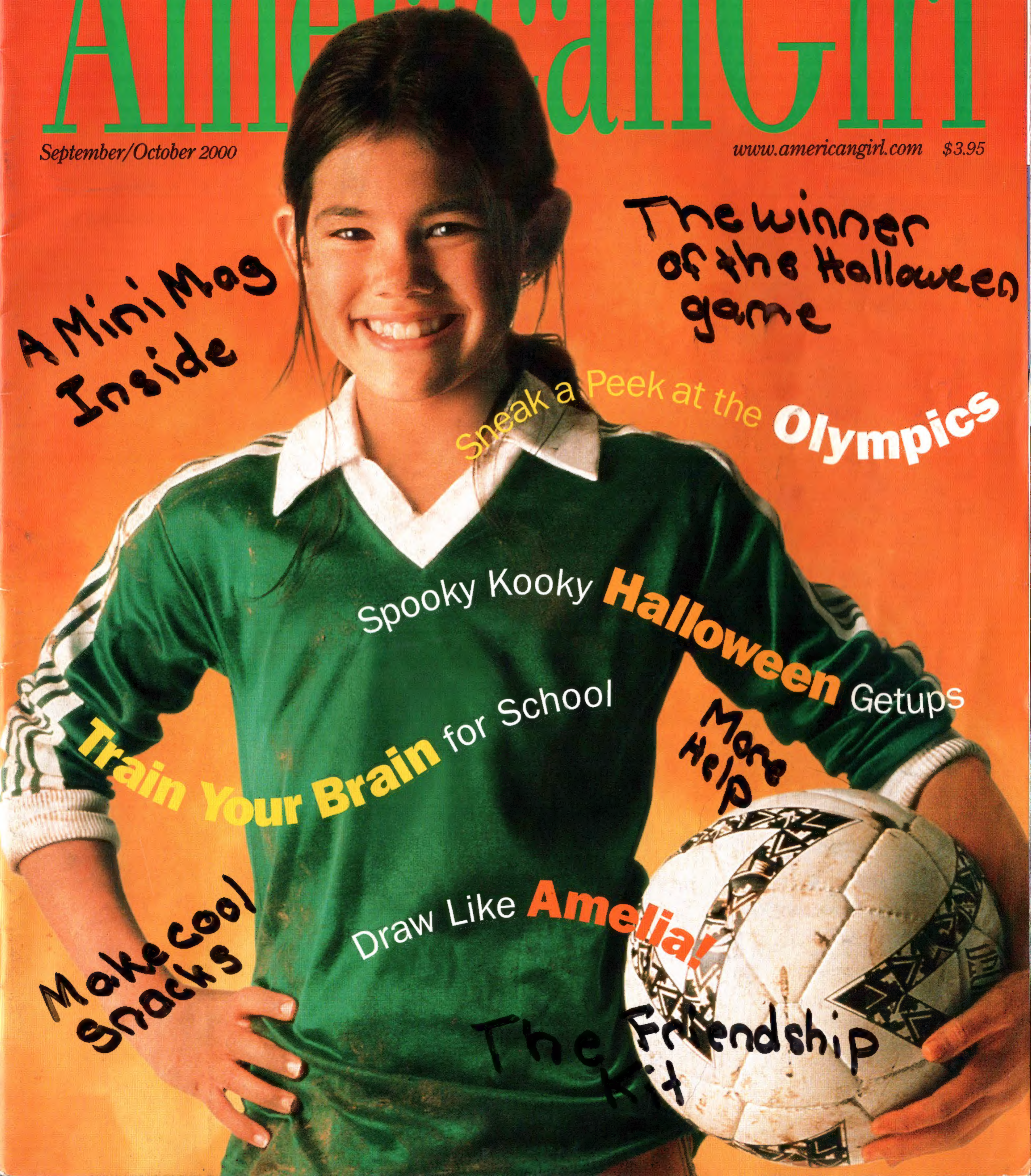
Train Your Brain for School

More
Help

Draw Like **Amelia!**

Make Cool
Snacks

The Friendship
Kit



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Brittany Biggett

See AG online!

Visit www.americangirl.com to peek behind the scenes of AG magazine! Always get a parent's permission before surfing the Web or giving out your full name, address, or any other personal info.



Look for fun facts sprinkled throughout the magazine!



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What's it *really* like to be a twin? AG readers—and the Olsen twins—tell you!

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American Girl®

Celebrating Girls, Yesterday and Today®



School Jewels

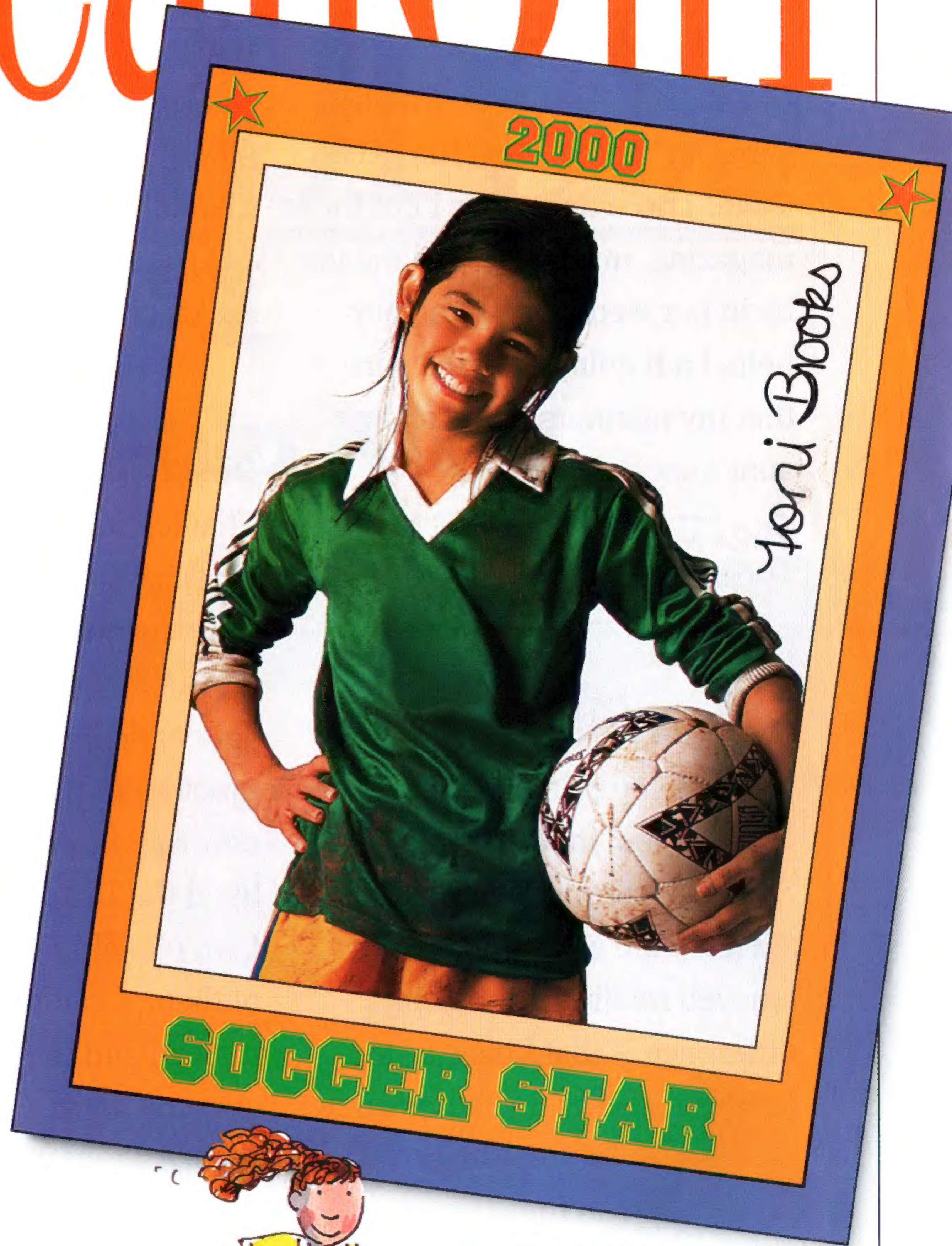
Make your school supplies sparkle!

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School Smarts

Tips for everything from homework to taking the big test

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On the Cover

Meet Toni Brooks, who is a big fan of the Wildcats, her school's soccer teams. "It's fun to play soccer in gym," she says, "but it's hard to keep my hands off the ball!"

Letters from You



Wedding Bells

Thanks for "Test Your Wedding Wisdom" in the May/June 2000 issue. Three days after I got the magazine, my aunt asked me to be in her wedding. With your help, I am going to make sure that my manners shine on my aunt's special day!

Alex Feldman
Age 11, Colorado



Life Story

I'm glad you printed "Amelia's Family Ties" in May/June. Amelia's story is very close to what my life is like, so I really enjoyed reading it. The only difference is that I have a step-father as well as my father's new wife and daughter. Maybe I'll let my father read the story since I can't explain how I feel in my own words.

Valerie Bailey
Age 12, Indiana



Power Pals

I enjoyed the snacks and games for the "Beadazzled Birthday" party from the May/June issue.

The party was lots of fun! But you left out the most important power bead: wood means friendship.

Elizabeth Rainville
Age 13, Illinois



Doubly Dreamy

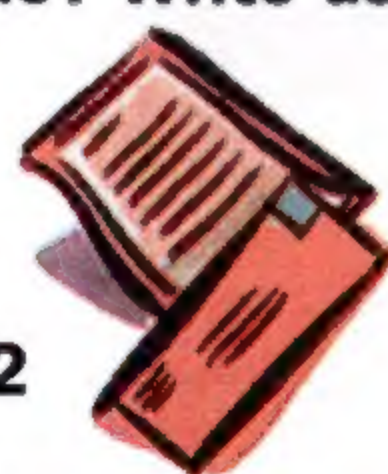
Thank you for including "Special Effects" in your May/June magazine. I am moving into a new house soon, and your article gave me some great ideas on how to make my new room more fun. I really liked the Dreamy Drape, so I am planning on making two of them. I can hang one over my bed and the second one over my desk.

Kaitlin Forster
Age 11, Michigan

Write to Us!

Want to drop us a line? Write us at:

AmericanGirl
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562



You can also send letters via e-mail to
im_agmag_editor@pleasantco.com.

No matter how you write us, be sure to include your name and birth date. We can't print every letter we get, but we read each and every one.

AmericanGirl



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Winner of a 2000
Parents' Choice
Gold Award



The National
Magazine
Awards Finalist

Girls Express



Buzzword

American girls everywhere will be using this buzzword this season:

frippery

How to say it: FRIHP-uh-ree

What it means: showy clothing

Where it comes from: *Frippery* comes from *frepe*, a fancy French word for "old garment."

One way to use it: "Fran's Bo Peep costume featured layers of flouncy, frilly frippery."



The buzzword is tucked somewhere into this issue of *American Girl*. Can you find it?

Friendship Kit

Give a friend some sweets, treats—and a smile.

Hope you find a fun surprise
In this batch of school supplies!

A roll of *Smarties* 'cause you're so bright
When you need a boost, just take a bite

A *scrunchie* for when your day gets hairy
Some *Life Savers* in case your teacher's scary

To bring you good luck, a four-leaf *clover*
An *eraser* to say it's O.K. to start over

A *shiny gold star* for acing a test
A *coin* to toss when you just have to guess

A *sucker* for problems that must be licked
And a *stamp* to remind you—our friendship will stick!

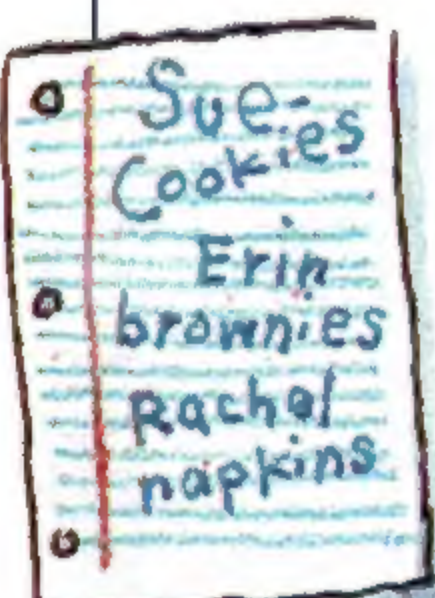


Fall Moneymaker

Having a great bake sale can be a piece of cake! Try these tips:



Pick a lucky location. Set up where hungry people will be—outside the PTA meeting, by the school lunchroom, or near the bleachers. Ask permission before you set up.



Make a list. Know who will bring what, right down to the paper napkins. Don't forget coins to make change.

Not sure what goodies to bring? Chocolatey treats sell the fastest!

Make it look scrumptious. Dress up your table with a bright tablecloth. Package sweets in colorful plastic wrap tied with ribbons. Label treats with eye-catching price tags.



Attract attention. Set pumpkins and hay bales around the table. Or have your sales staff dress up like ghosts and goblins—and watch customers gobble up the goodies!



Turn to page 49 for a shining example of a bake sale.

True Story

Ashley scores a soccer lesson with a star.



Dear American Girl,

I won the chance for my team to have a soccer clinic with Mia Hamm! It was the grand prize in a name drawing held by Dreyer's and Edy's Ice Cream. When they called to tell me I'd won, I couldn't stop jumping up and down!

The day of the clinic, I had butterflies in my stomach. Reporters were everywhere! Then Mia Hamm shook my hand, and I stopped being nervous. She didn't seem like a superstar anymore—she was just a normal, friendly person.

Mia taught us some cool tricks, like how to stop the ball with one foot and kick it with the other. Then we played a game. Mia would pass off to me, and I'd pass off to someone else. Afterward she signed balls for each of us. I'm going to keep mine forever!

Sincerely,

Ashley Northrup

Age 12, Virginia

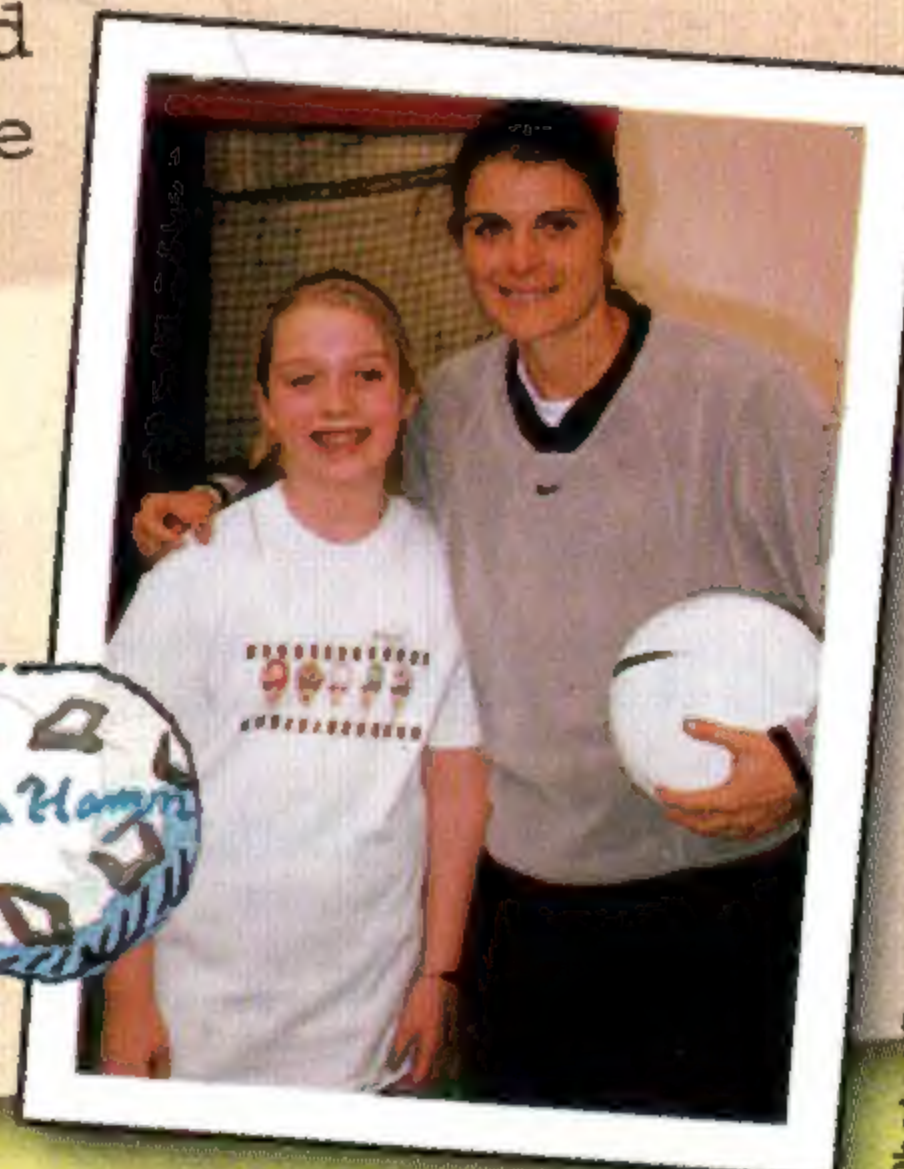


Photo: Dreyer's and Edy's Grand Ice Cream

What a Kick!

Have a ball with these soccer tips.

Look like a klutz. If you're right-handed, practice with your left foot. If you're left-handed, use your right foot. It will help you improve your coordination.



Listen for the whistle. Play to the whistle, not to what you see happen. The referee can miss a play, but the game will continue until the whistle blows.



Be sneaky.

Don't look at the player you're passing to—surprise your opponent!

Turn your body into a pillow.

To trap the ball, you need to cushion it. Act like a pillow and you'll do great!



Time for a Change

This fall, try putting a new twist on a favorite activity. "My family always gets original when we carve pumpkins," says Jessi Moths, 12, of Michigan. "Last year I put a flamingo on mine!" Here are some other fun ideas for fall:

Dress up a scarecrow in a fancy old dress.



Add movie-star sunglasses for instant glamour.

Rake a maze



Then challenge your friends to a race.

Don't wait for school



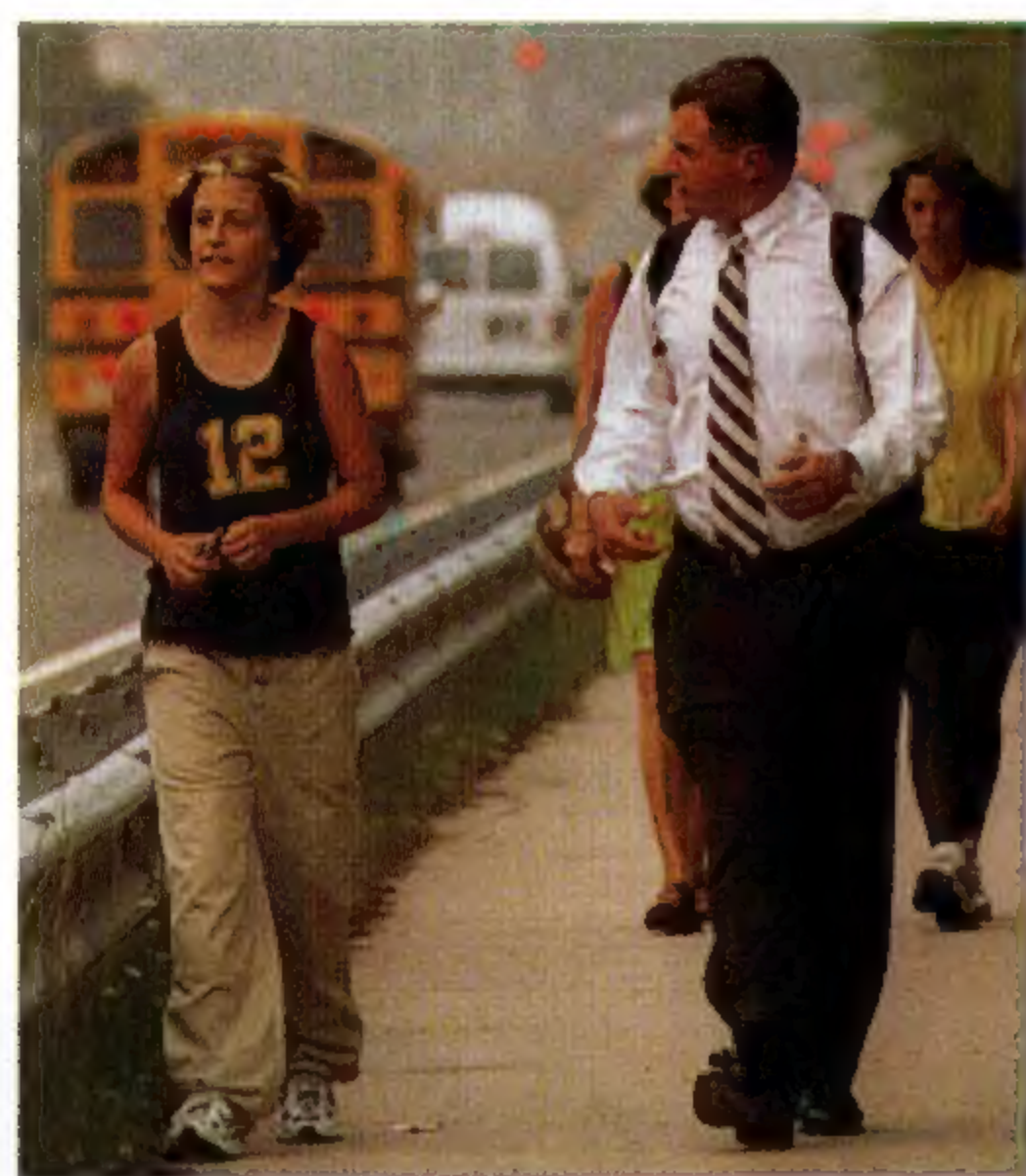
pictures—bring

a camera to recess



and take your own!

Wheel Deal



Tiffany walks the town mayor to school.

When Tiffany LaFlamme learned last fall that her school bus route had been canceled, she decided to get into gear. Tiffany's bus rides ended after her Massachusetts town built new sidewalks. But Tiffany, then 13, worried about walking so close to a busy highway. And the thought of trudging 1½ miles through slippery snow and ice in the winter gave her cold feet!

Tiffany e-mailed Mayor Albano and asked him to get her bus back on the road. She even invited him to walk the path with her. He agreed! Along the way, Tiffany pointed out the heavy traffic whizzing by. She also explained how some parts of the sidewalk could go unshoveled in the winter. The mayor listened—lugging Tiffany's backpack the whole way!

The 25-minute trek did the trick—the mayor agreed to get a bus for Tiffany and 70 other kids from November to March. "I feel like I accomplished something!" says Tiffany.

AG

POLL



Your answers:

In our May/June issue, we asked you if the trend toward girls-only TV shows, sports, and stuff was too much of a good thing. Here's what you said:

Go, girls! 531

Let in the boys! 405

"Enough with the 'girls-only' craze," says 10-year-old Maria Weissman of Massachusetts. "Boys aren't aliens—they're people, too!" But Katie Thornton, 11, of Tennessee says, "It's our time to shine!"

Next question:

Would you change your name if you could? Check one.

☐ Yes

☐ No

If your answer is yes, what would you want your new name to be?



Cut out your answers and mail them to us with your name, address, and birth date.

A Gold-Medal Suit?

Watch for a fancy new swimsuit at the 2000 Olympics. Made of a special fabric, Speedo's Fastskin suit promises to help athletes swim faster than ever. Is it worth the \$200 price tag? AG reader Rachael McMillan tried it out!



"The Fastskin suit did help me grip the water better, but it added four seconds to my 50-meter freestyle! It might help Olympic swimmers, but not me." ★★☆☆☆☆

Rachael McMillan
Age 13, North Carolina

Help Wanted!

Summer's over, and we want to hear your funniest vacation stories! Did you get lost on your way to the Lost Canyon? Did a hungry critter crash your picnic? Tell us briefly about something that went wrong but made you laugh anyway. Send your vacation disasters to the address on page 2. Include your name, address, and birth date.



Cut out your answers and mail them to us.



Class Act

While millions of girls head off to soccer or Scouts after school, Amelia Mostovoy likes to hang around—on a trapeze! The California girl spends most of her afternoons at a circus school. Amelia, 9, and other young acrobats bend into pretzels, dangle from ropes, and perform other daring feats.



Circus school is fun, but it's no place to clown around. Some of the stunts are downright scary. In one act, an adult tosses

Amelia 12 feet into the air. Amelia flips backward, landing feetfirst on a crash pad! "I don't think when I'm in the air," she says. "I just do it!"



Learning new tricks takes teamwork—and trust!

What's the best part of circus school? Show time! The students perform in town twice a year. Being in the spotlight has helped Amelia conquer stage fright. Here's her advice: "Don't look at the audience if you make a mistake," she warns. "You'll lose your nerve!"

Foolin' Around

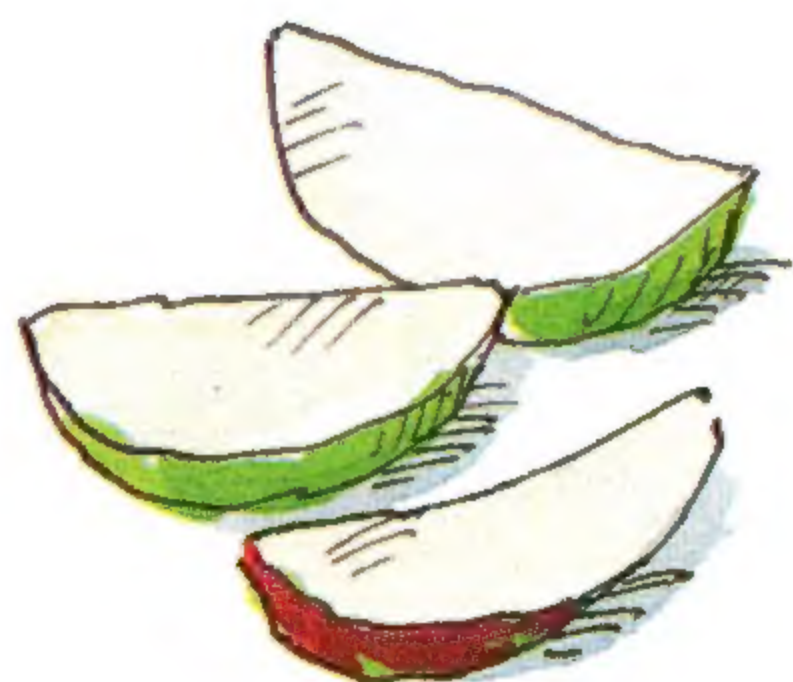
Do you have a funny—not mean!—trick for April Fools'? It could be a trick you've played on a friend or one that someone played on you. Describe your trick and send it to the address on page 2. Deadline: October 15, 2000. Winners will appear in the March/April 2001 issue.



Crunch!



Crisp apples + fun munchies + an adult to help slice and chop = Yum!



Apple Slices



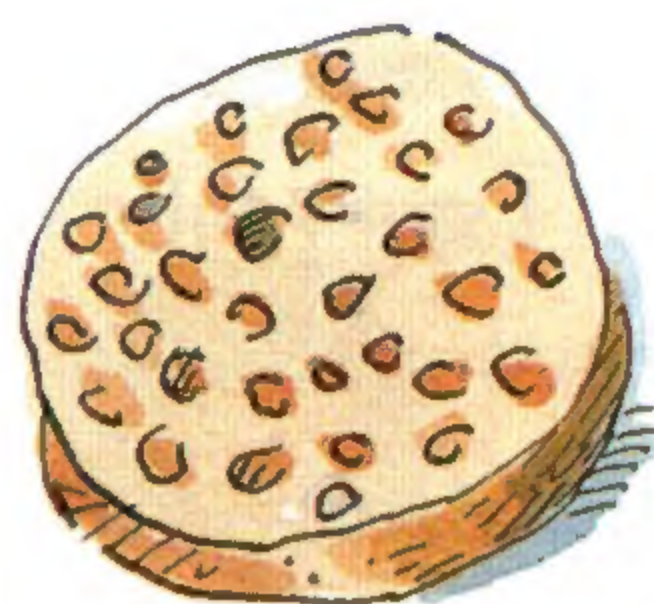
Caramel Dip



Chopped Nuts



Sweet Slices



Toasted English Muffin



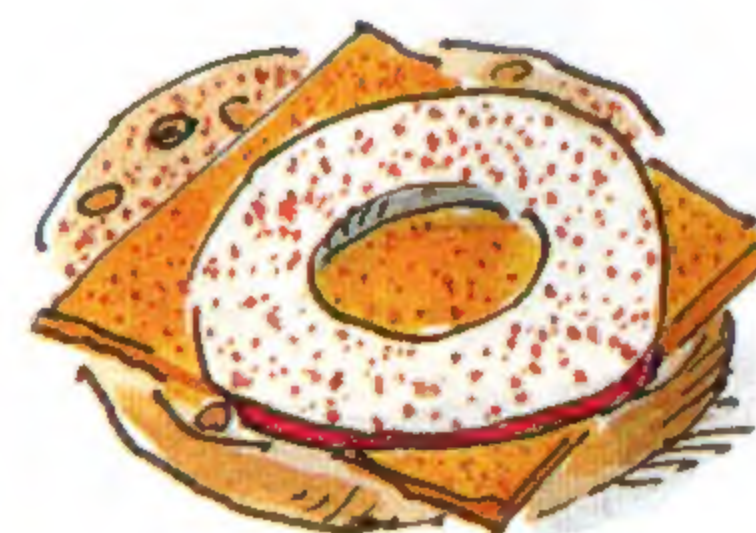
Cheese Slice



Apple Slice



Cinnamon



Easy Cheesy



Bagel



Cream Cheese



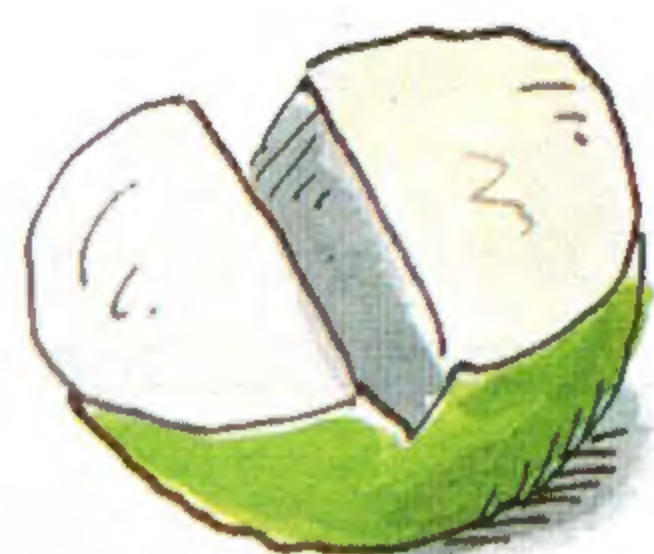
Brown Sugar



Chopped Apples



Feelin' Fruity Bagel



Apple Half



Peanut Butter



Raisins



Rice Krispies



Peanutty Crisp



Apple Juice



Ginger Ale



Vanilla Ice Cream



Sparkling Apple Float

Worrywarts

What freaks you out? What can you do to stop being nervous about school, sports, or a big event?



Don't just sit there worrying! Spend time with

a friend, do a hobby, or talk with someone. Those things take my mind off my worries. Remember, worrying won't solve your problems.

Steffi Lau
Age 11, California



I was nervous on the first day of school last year

because I had a new teacher. To make me feel better, my mom gave me a surprise for breakfast. It was a bowl of ice cream! It kept a smile on my face all day. I hope it becomes a yearly tradition.

Amy Berger
Age 10, Connecticut



I used to worry about taking timed division

tests. When I get tense, I forget everything! Now I massage my face before a test. It helps me relax and remember my facts.

Vanessa Jackson
Age 11, Wisconsin



If you freak out about a big event, take a walk the

night before and think your problems through. It works!

Sarah Reed
Age 12, West Virginia



If you are a big worrier, try this! Slowly say the

word *relax* to yourself about 20 times, and you'll calm down.

Erin McAllister
Age 9, Texas



I have a horse, and I get really nervous when I'm

in shows. Now my dad and I put on pretend shows before the real one. He tells me what I'm doing wrong, and I work on it. Then I'm not so nervous during the real show!

Caroline Horn
Age 9, Illinois



I worry so much about the first day of school, I cry!

To calm down, I ask myself what's the worst thing that could happen. Then I realize it's unlikely to happen, and even if it does, it won't be the end of the world.

Leah Winter
Age 13, Washington



I used to get worked up before tests, even if I knew the material. Now I go through the test slowly and do the ones I know how to do first. You don't have to be the first one done with a test. It doesn't make you any smarter.

Emily Seidl
Age 11, Michigan



I was going to be in a spelling bee. My mom could tell I was nervous, so she told me to think of my dad dancing in the living room. When he does that, it's so funny! Then I wasn't as nervous and I won the spelling bee!

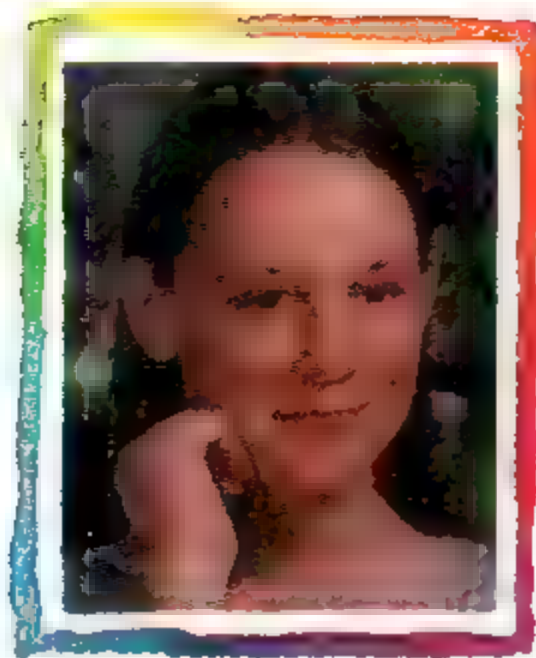


Emily Heath
Age 10, California



When I am tense, I close my eyes and inhale, then exhale slowly while I count back from ten. It really calms me down.

Ashley Ruiz-Margenot
Age 13, Florida



My grandparents gave me tips to stop worrying: Hum a happy song. Wake up 15 minutes earlier than you have to and spend the time doing something you like. Spend the last 30 minutes before bed doing something pleasant.



Laura Kendall
Age 12, California



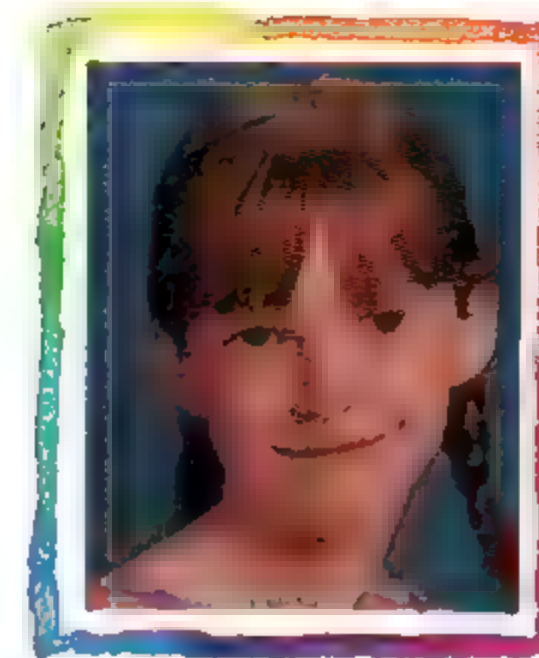
I used to get nervous before a piano recital. Now I practice in front of my parents to get used to people watching me. At the recital, I remember that the audience wants me to do my best, too!

Ellie VerDowle
Age 12, Washington



Every time I take a test, I pretend I'm on "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" It's more fun, and I'm less worried. But I remember that it's still a test and I have to do well!

Kathleen Geer
Age 12, Tennessee



If you're worried about losing a game, getting a low score on a test, or messing up, try using a P.B.A. (Positive Brain Approach). Say to yourself, "I can, I can," and you will!

Kayla Gravelle
Age 10, Oregon

Speak from Your Heart

Next subject: Being different. How are you different from other girls? Is it the way you look, the things you like, or the activities you do? Do you get teased because of it? What are some of the ways you deal with being different?

Send answers, name, birth date, and school photo to: **AmericanGirl**
8400 Fairway Place, Middleton, WI 53562. While we can print only about a dozen letters in each Heart to Heart, we read and learn from every one!

Deadline: October 7, 2000.

Some answers will appear in the March/April 2001 issue. ★





← Not the kind of face you make in a mirror. Draw it!

MAKE A FACE

by Marissa Moss
(and quick-on-the-draw Amelia!)

Special Features!

Eyes and mouths show people's moods.



↑
happy eyes



↑
mad eyes



↑
scared eyes



↑
suspicious eyes



↑
tired eyes



↑
alien eyes



↑
bug eyes

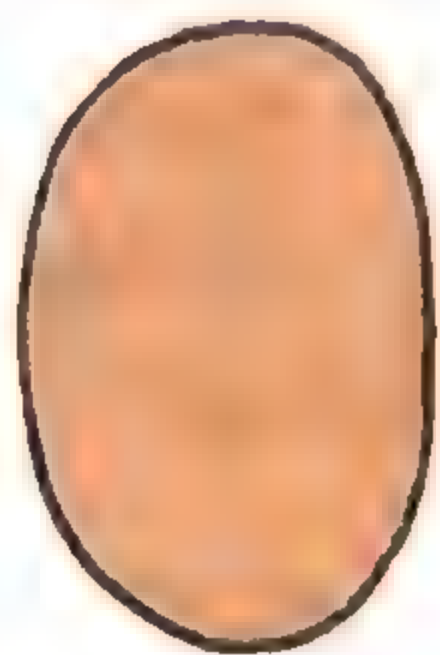


↑
loony eyes

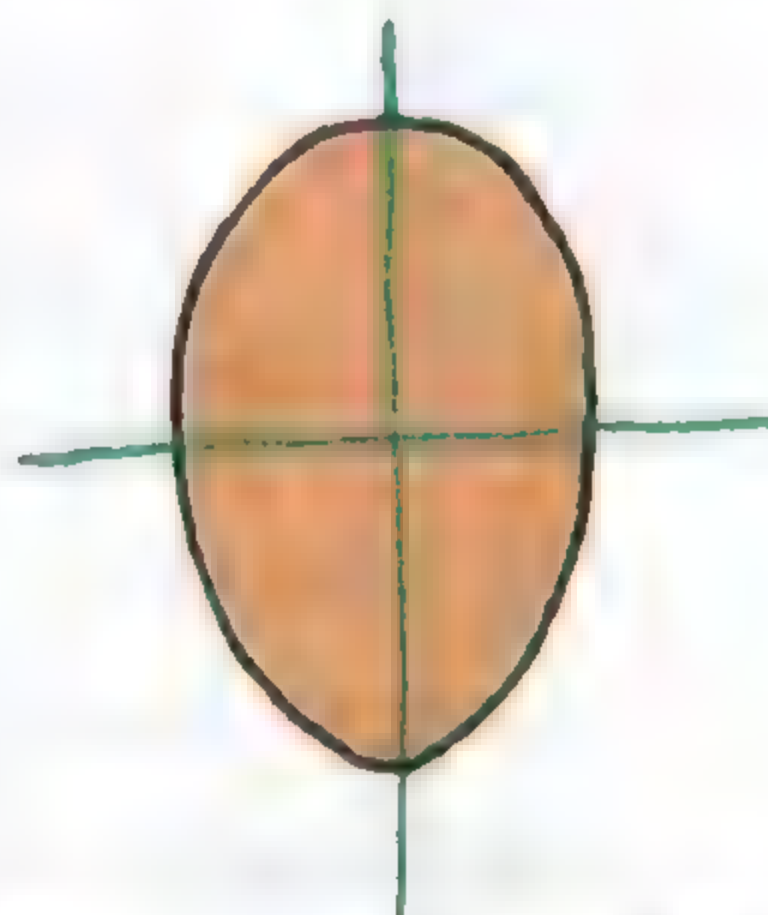
I LOVE to draw! I've been doing it ever since I could hold a crayon. But the way you draw is like the way you speak — everyone sounds and draws their own way. I don't care if I can draw something EXACTLY the way it looks, but I want it to look like I drew it. That's Amelia style!

(sort of like a map)

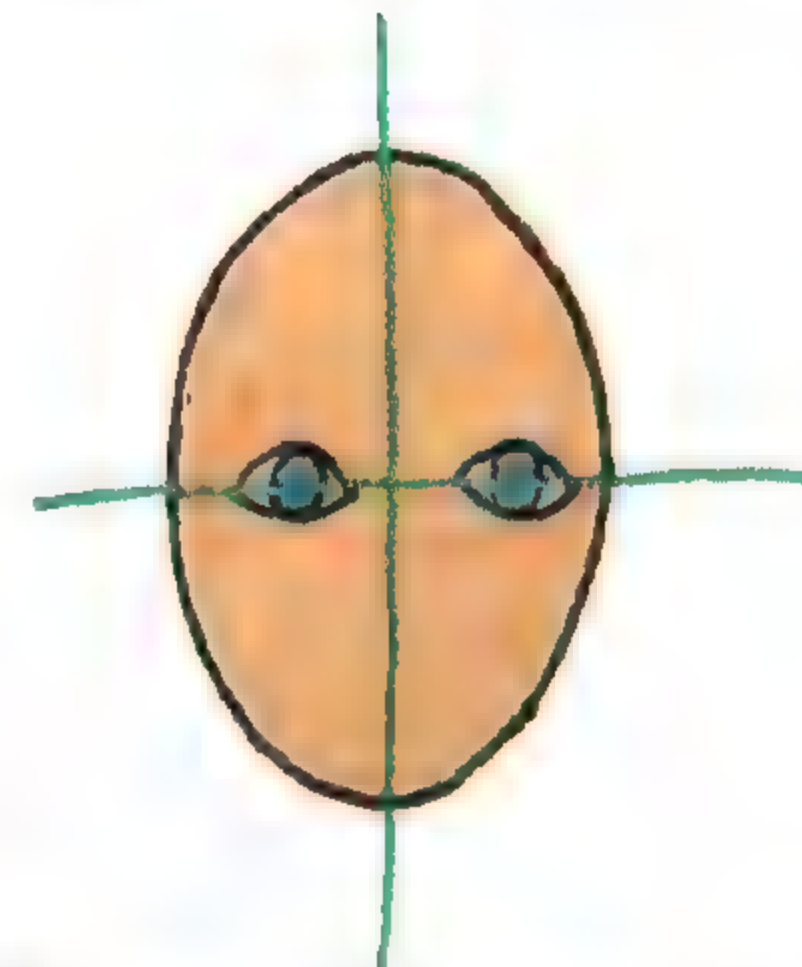
Here are my tips for drawing fantastic faces. It helps to make a grid on the head to show you where to put the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. After you've done it a few times, you won't need the grid.



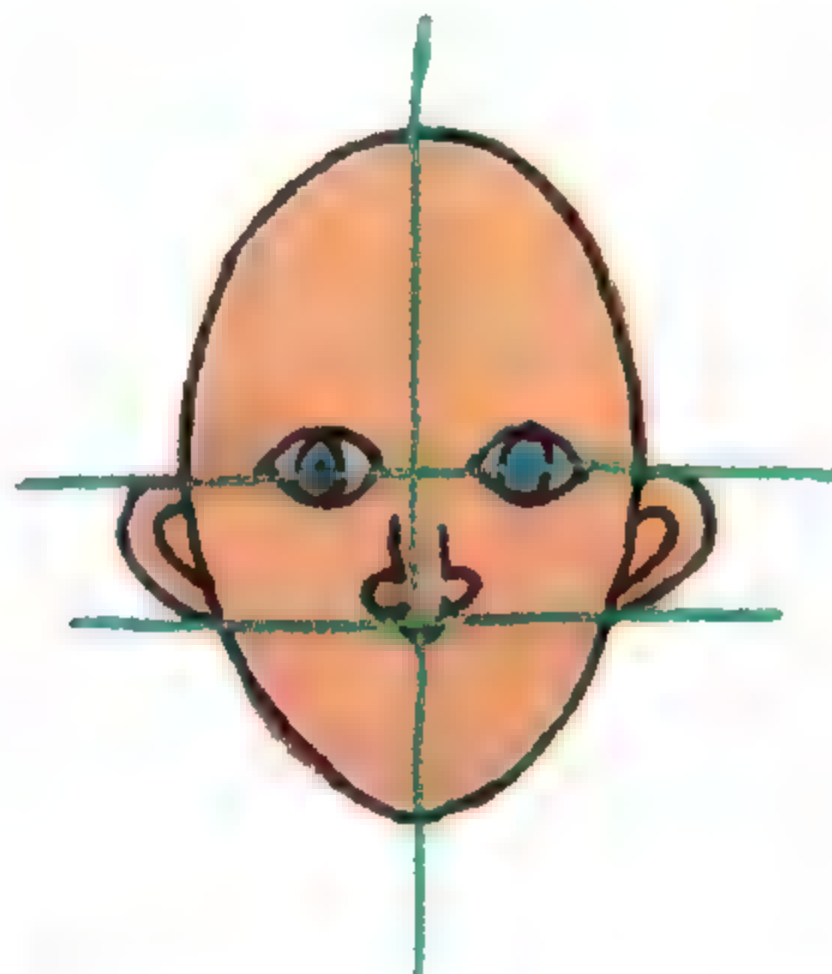
① Start with an oval.



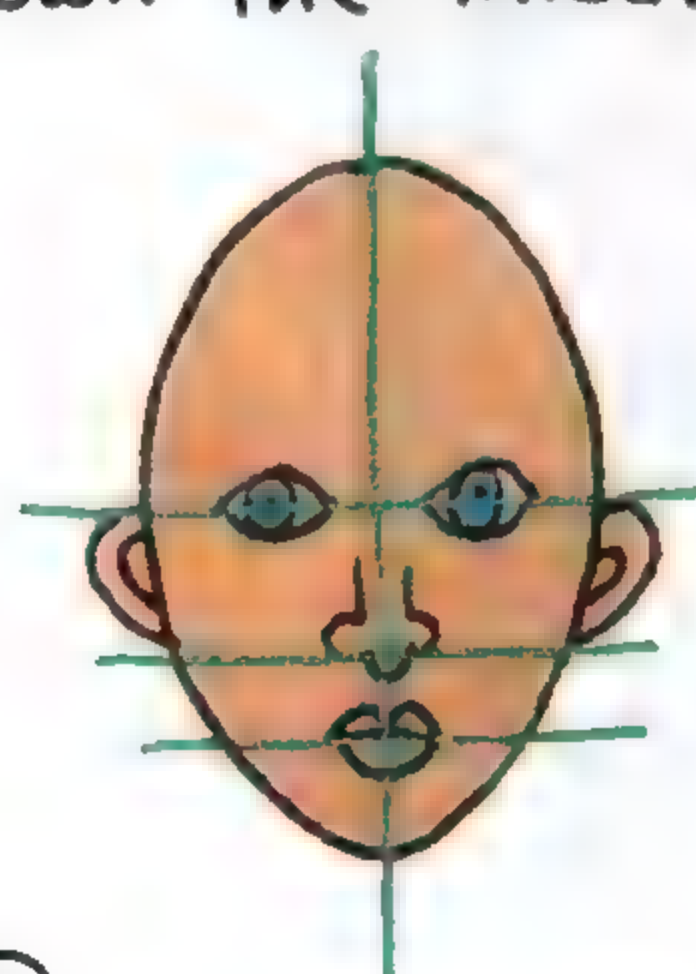
② Draw a horizontal line halfway up the oval, and another line right down the middle.



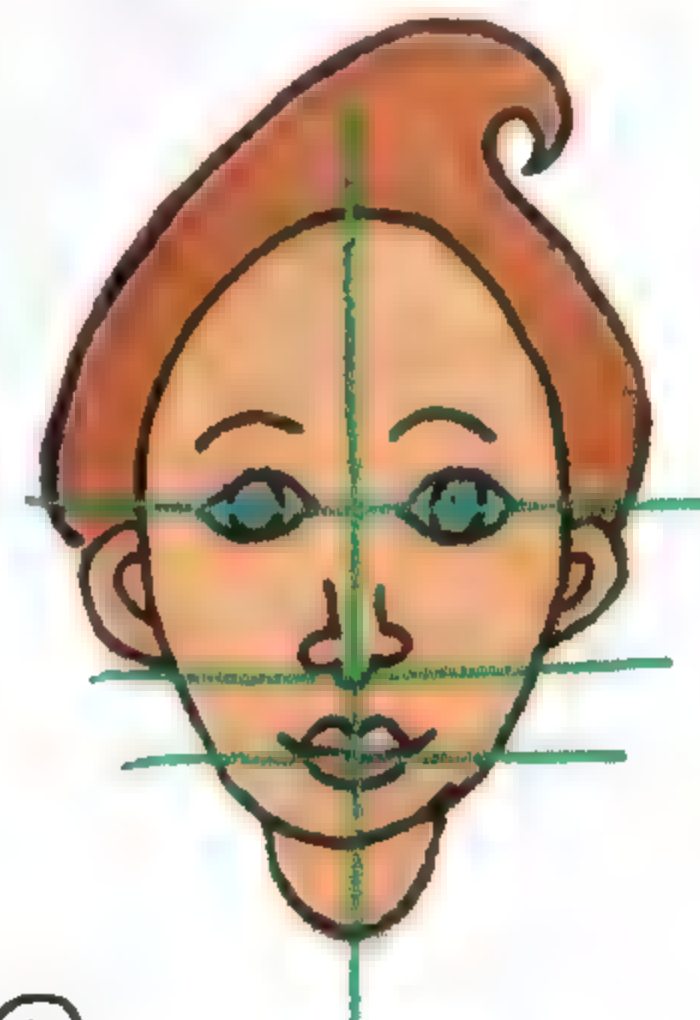
③ The eyes go on the horizontal line.



④ Draw another line halfway between the eyes and chin. The bottoms of the nose and ears go there.



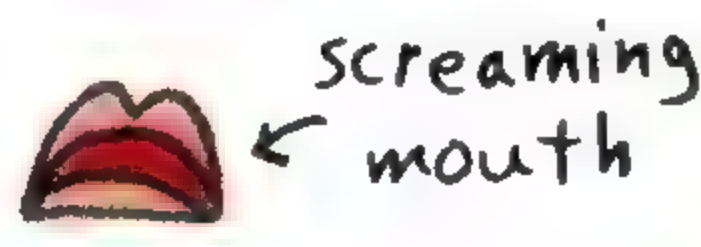
⑤ Draw one more line halfway between the nose and chin. Put the mouth there.



⑥ Now add hair, eyebrows, and a neck!



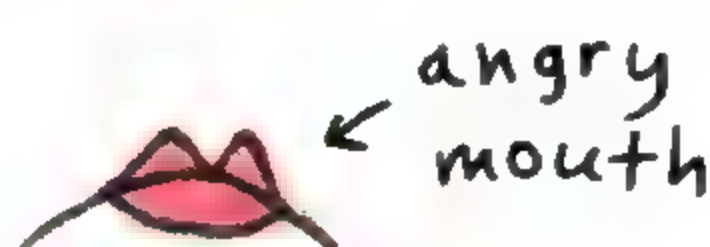
kissy lips



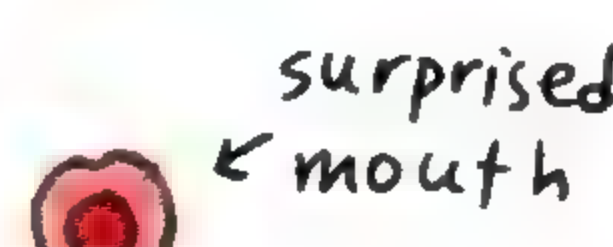
screaming mouth



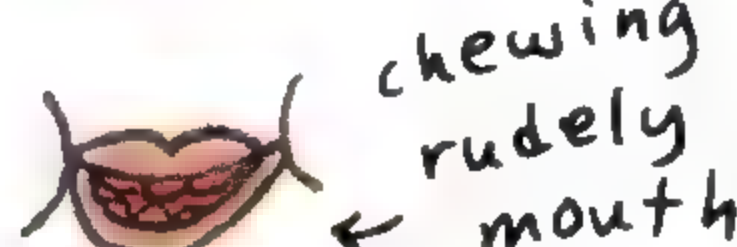
laughing mouth



angry mouth



surprised mouth

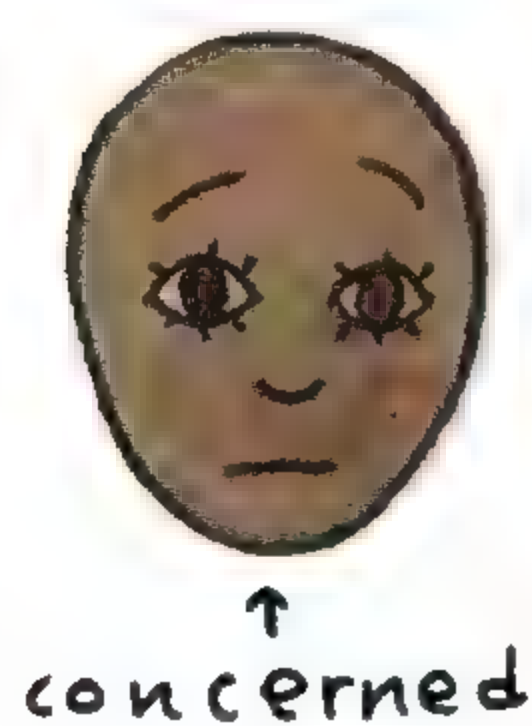


chewing rudely mouth

Express yourself! The trick to drawing good expressions is eyebrows! Watch how these faces change when the eyebrows move:

Go back in time with Amelia's Amazing Time Machine!

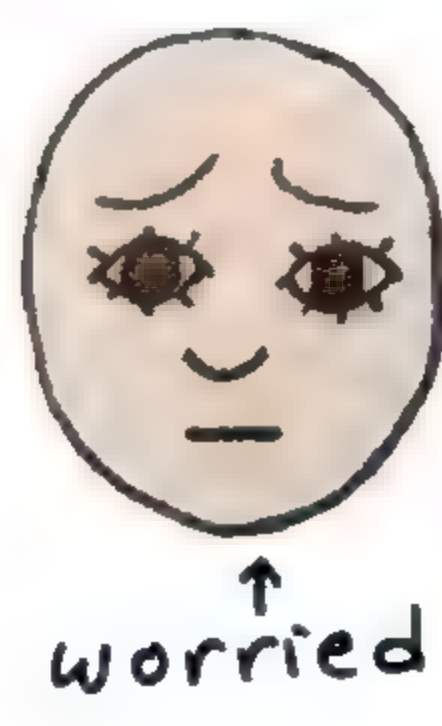
The lower you draw the eyes, the younger the person looks.



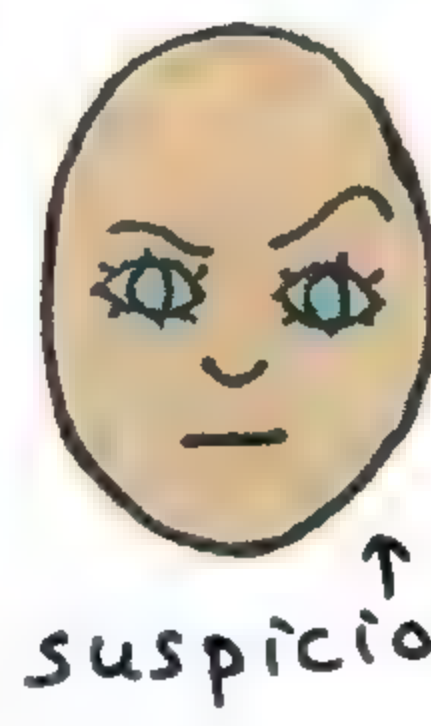
↑
concerned



↑
angry



↑
worried



↑
suspicious

Now you try.
Add eyebrows to these faces.

Add mouths to these.

Add hair or hats, too!



↑
old person
(wrinkles add age)



↑
grown-up



↑
regular person
(someone my age, that is)



↑
six-year-old



↑
baby



↑
martian

Fancy hair can add a lot of personality. But face it — these people need something more. Get rid of these blank expressions!



↑
energetic hair



↑
scared hair



↑
wavy hair

Here's how I drew a person when I was three.



↑
looks like a very bald sun



↑
How I draw now!

The best way to learn to draw is do it, do it, DO IT! The more you draw, the better you'll get. So pick up that pencil now! ★

Want to make your own masterpiece?
Check out the new book
Amelia's Easy-as-Pie Drawing Guide!

A full-page photograph of a diver in mid-air, performing a backflip above a swimming pool. The diver is wearing a blue and red swimsuit. The pool below has lane lines and a blue wall. In the background, there are green trees and a clear blue sky with some clouds. The word 'Take' is written in large blue letters at the top left.

Take

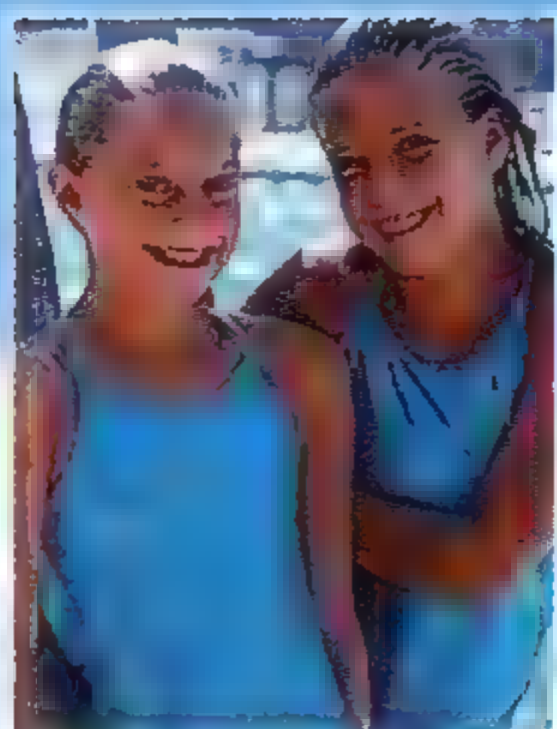
AG talked with **real girl** **athletes** about three wet

the

and wild events you'll see at this September's **Olympics**. Dive into

Plunge!

these **exciting sports** and meet the girls who **love** them.



Synchronized Diving

This year, for the first time ever, synchronized diving will appear at the Olympics. Chelsea Davis (left) and Emily Bouck, both 12 and top divers in their age group, help you get on board with their sport.

The Basics

Synchronized diving is a lot like regular diving—athletes try to perform difficult dives with proper form. In synchronized diving, though, two divers work together as a team. They perform the same dive, or similar dives, at the same time. They're judged on how well they perform each dive individually, but they're also judged on whether all the parts of their dives are synchronized—performed in the same way at the same time. "You have to get your timing exactly right!" explains Chelsea.

The Dives

In competition, Emily and Chelsea usually perform five different dives, including both front dives and reverse dives (like the dive pictured on the left). With all the dives, says Emily, "We try to make it look like it's only one diver to someone watching from the side."

The Olympics

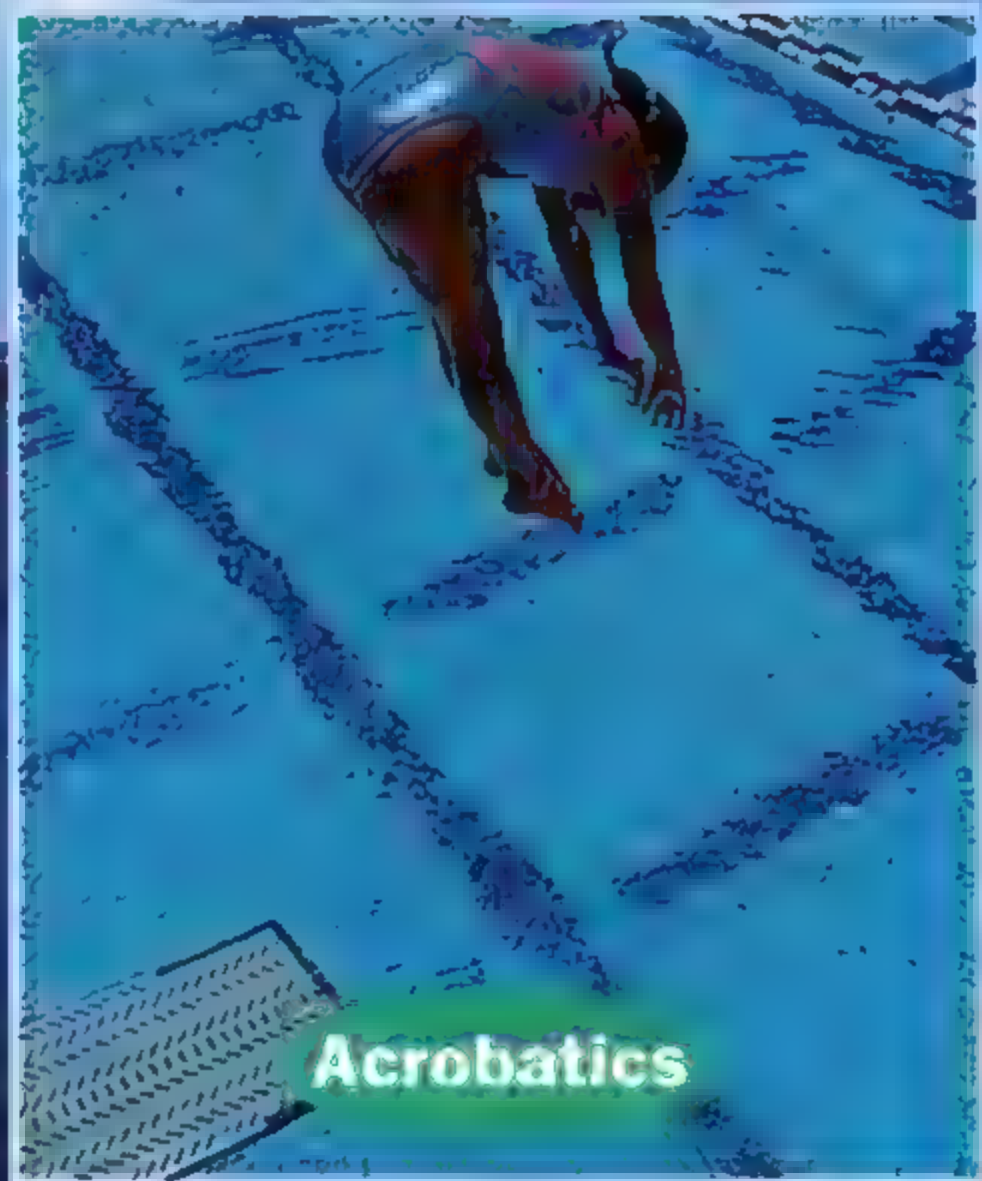
Chelsea and Emily aren't competing in the Olympics this summer, but they're hopeful they'll get their chance in 2004. Mark Ruiz, who's on the team the girls compete with, is one of the favorites in men's diving this year. When you're watching the Olympic divers, Chelsea says to look at how they enter the water—that usually tells a lot about their dive. "Watch the divers' attitudes," Emily adds. "See if they're having fun or not. One of the main things in diving is having fun!"

The Challenges



Takeoff

Divers time their steps so they'll both make it to the end of the board in perfect position for a great takeoff.



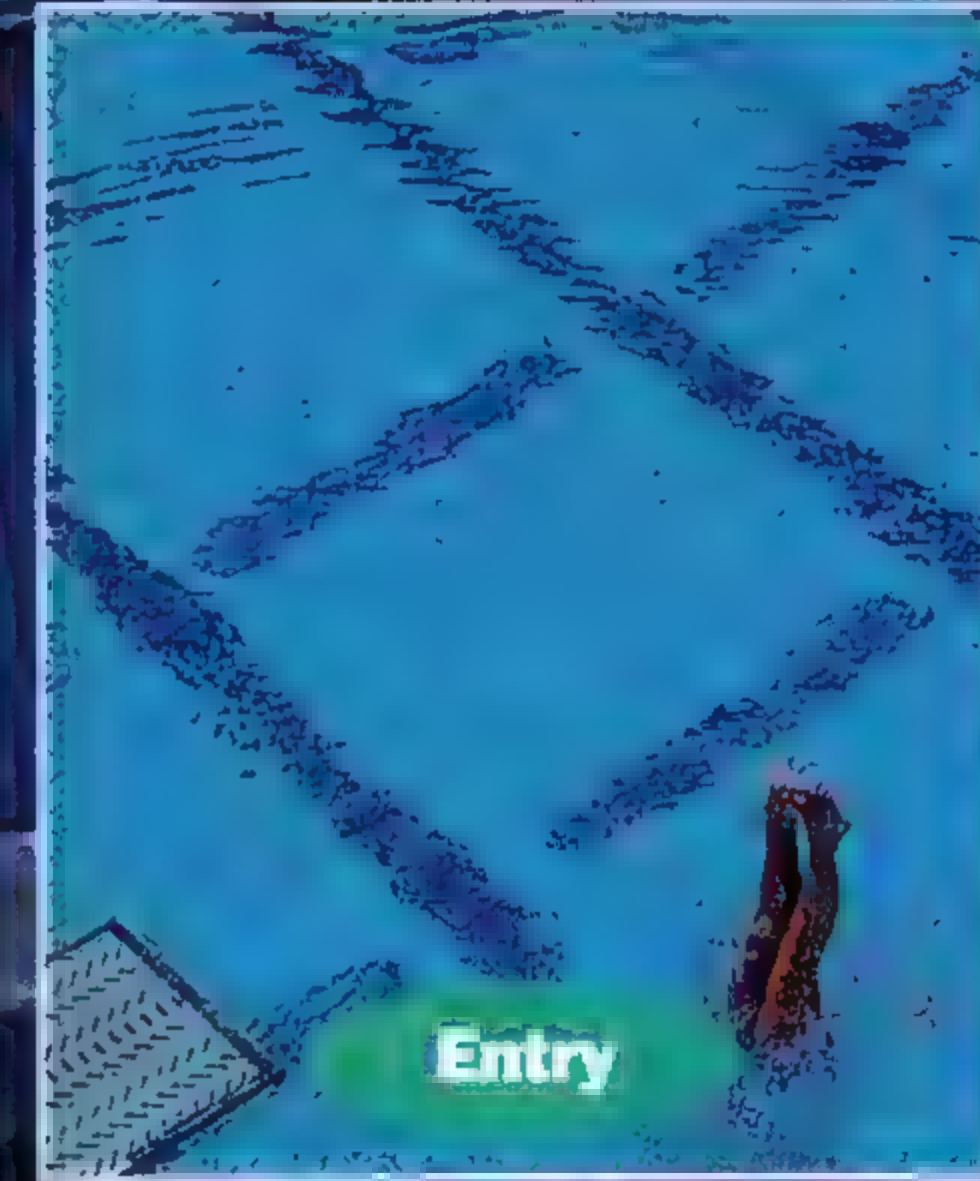
Acrobatics

This move is called a pike. The girls also add front and back somersaults and twists to their dives to increase the score they earn.



Midair

Divers must keep their legs and toes together and their toes pointed at all times.



Entry

Divers try to make as small a splash as possible. "You have to have a tight body when you go into the water so you don't make a splash," Emily explains.



Water Polo

For men, water polo has been an Olympic event since 1900. But 2000 is the first year women can go for Olympic gold in water polo! Top youth player Remy Champion, 13, gets you into the swim of this fast-paced team sport.

The Basics

"Water polo is a lot like soccer. You have an offensive team and a defensive team. The ball is like a soccer ball, and you are trying to get it into a goal," explains Remy. "Except it's in the water. And you have to play with your hands." That's not even the hardest part! Except for the goalie, water polo players can touch the ball with only one hand at a time. The game gets rough, too. Players wear helmets for protection from the speeding ball. During each seven-minute quarter, players must tread water or swim

constantly. When the game is on, the seven people in play for each team aren't allowed to touch the bottom of the pool or even hold on to the side. They often swim two miles in a single game!





The Game

Remy is what's known as a "driver." When her team's on offense, she sprints, or swims quickly, toward the other team's goal. Then she tries to stay open to catch a pass from one of her teammates. If she gets the ball, she tries to throw it past the goalie into the goal. "I'm a good driver because I'm a good swimmer," says Remy. "I've been swimming competitively since I was 5 or 6. I'm also able to sprint short distances. If I can get open, I can score."

The Olympics

Remy thinks the U.S. women's team has a great shot at an Olympic medal: "They've been playing really well in 2000, beating teams ranked higher than they are." If you're going to watch the women play, Remy says, "Watch all the calls the referees make. When they make a call, they'll usually point in the direction the ball is going, which should help you follow the game." As for Remy herself, she's hoping to make her Olympics dreams come true in 2004.

The Challenges



Endurance

To build leg strength, players tread water holding jugs filled with 10-12 pounds of water.



Ball Skills

Players practice "dribbling" the ball. They move it forward without holding it.



Alertness

This game moves fast! Players try to keep an eye on what's going on all around the pool.

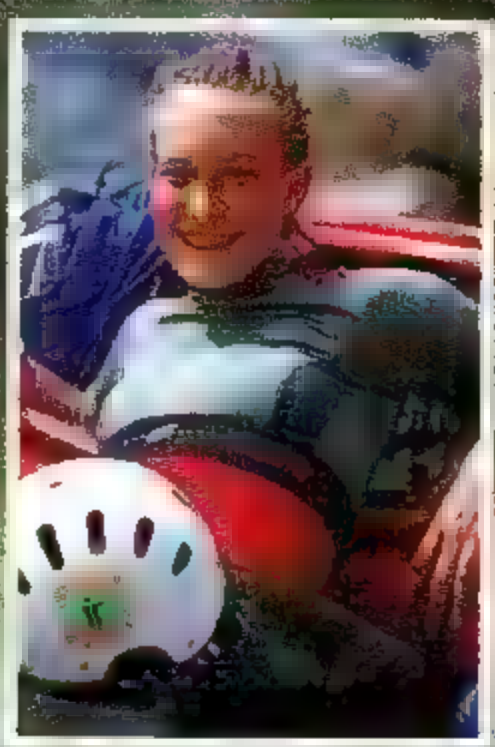


Teamwork

Water polo is a real team sport! Remy can't score without the help of her whole team.

The water polo team is made up of players and a coach. The players are called drivers, defenders, and goalies. The coach is called the head coach.





Whitewater Kayaking

Last spring, 14-year-old Becca Red became the youngest female ever to qualify for the U.S. Olympic team trials in whitewater kayaking. She'll guide you through her exciting sport.

The Basics

In slalom whitewater kayaking, competitors paddle through a marked course on a river. Kayakers make their way through the course one at a time, just as ski racers go down the mountain one at a time. The course is made

up of 20 to 25 gates hung on wires over the river. The gates, pairs of poles the kayakers must pass through, are set up in groups. "In a group of four gates, at the very first gate of that group,

you have to think about how you're going to get through the fourth gate," Becca explains. "It's kind of like a puzzle, and you have to put the pieces together."





The Boats

Becca has been competing in her sport for nearly three years. Kayaking's speed moves take time to learn. At first, Becca had a hard time finding a boat that fit her body well. So she wrote a letter to Dagger Kayak Company asking them to develop a boat specially made for kids. Eventually, she helped Dagger design that kayak, called the Dynamo. Now she's a member of Dagger's Team D! In addition to racing, Becca competes in special kayak "rodeos" that feature trick moves. One of the tricks she likes best is called a cart-wheel. She actually flips her boat sideways end to end!

The Olympics

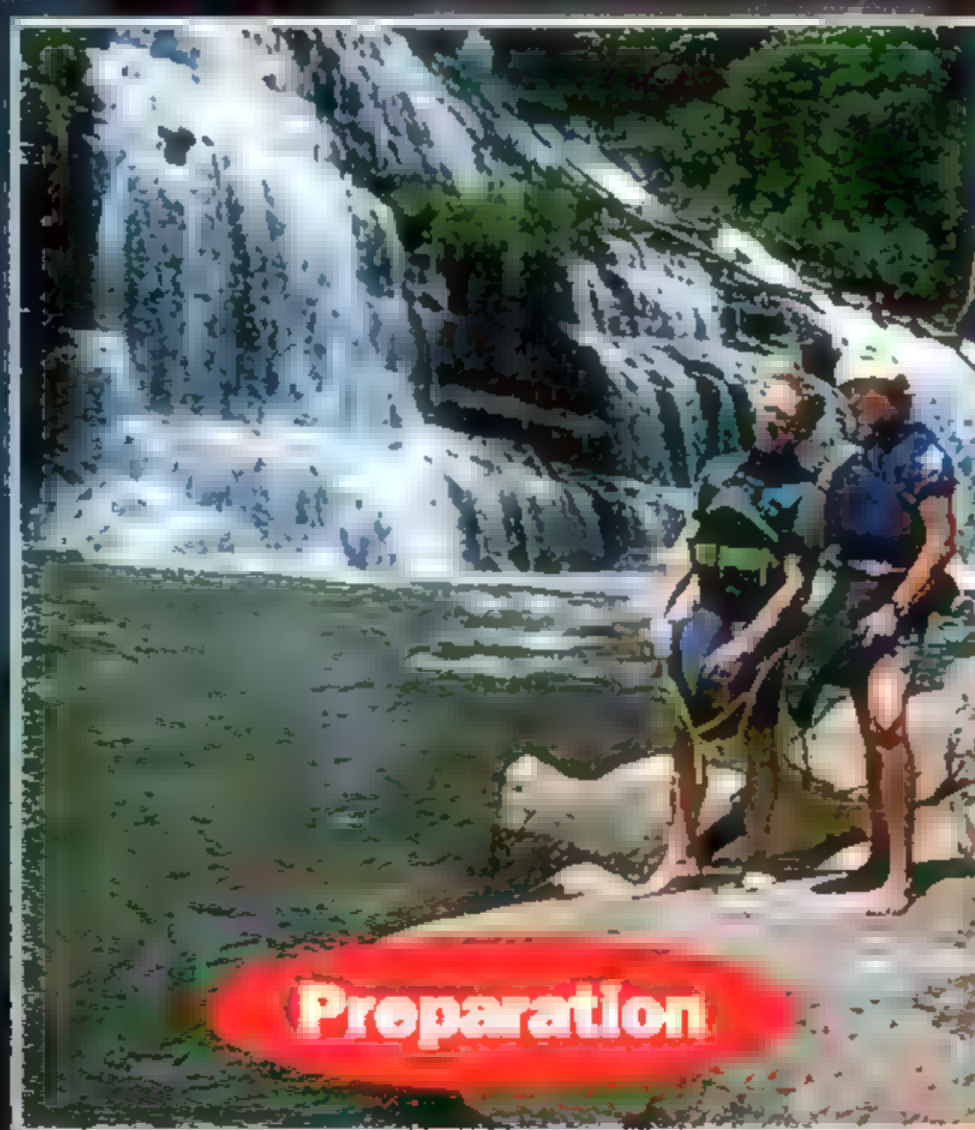
It's Becca's goal to someday make it to the Olympics. She knows, though, that it will take her years of training to get there. For now, she'll watch American paddlers like Rebecca Bennet-Giddens and Scott Shipley go for the gold in Australia.

The Challenges



Safety

Becca always wears a helmet and a life jacket. She also wears a "sprayskirt," which keeps her legs warm and dry.



Preparation

Becca and another kayaker take a good look at the river before they try to paddle it.



Skill

Kayak racing takes strength and concentration. "If you're not careful the water can flip you over," Becca explains.



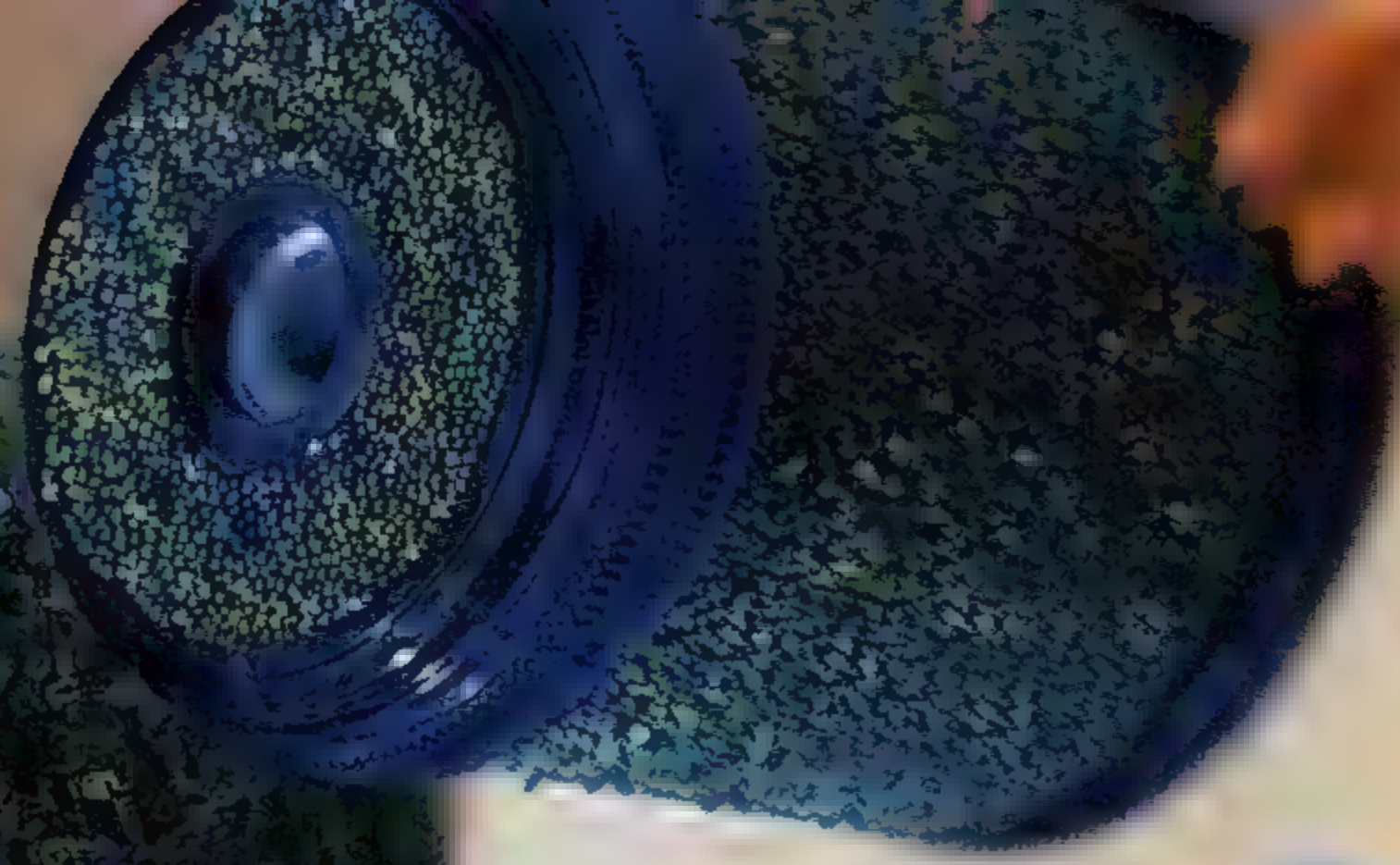
Courage

Becca loves the thrill of kayaking: "There's just something about the water that makes it so exciting!" ★

Craft

School Jewels

Turn your ho-hum school supplies into sparkly works of art. Start with a batch of pens, then go wild!



- After you've made a pen, bead lots of different school supplies!
- Flat areas are easiest. Stick on the tape in strips, edge to edge.
 - For small, curvy areas, use several small pieces of tape. Don't remove the backing until the item is completely covered.
 - Make stickers! Cover a piece of tape with microbeads. Cut out a shape, remove the backing and stick!



You will need

- Wax paper
- 2 shoe box lids
- 2 20-gram packages seed beads
- 1 20-gram package bugle beads
- Scotch brand heavy-duty clear mounting tape
- Scissors
- 5 plain ballpoint pens
- 1 small package microbeads or fine-grade glitter

Where to find it

Heavy-duty clear mounting tape:
Hardware and craft stores

Microbeads or fine-grade glitter:
Craft and rubber-stamp stores
Microbead brands: Beedz by Art
Accents, Beadazzles

If your local store doesn't have
microbeads, find them online at
www.artaccents.net



- 1** Place a piece of wax paper in each shoe box lid. Pour seed beads and bugle beads into one lid. Mix them together. Cut 2 strips of tape to fit pen barrel lengthwise. Touch sticky part of tape as little as possible.



- 2** Stick first piece of tape lengthwise on pen. Remove backing. Stick second piece of tape on opposite side of pen. Overlap edges of tape if you need to. Remove backing. Place pen in shoebox lid with bugle and seed beads. Roll pen in beads. Press beads into tape so bugle beads lie flat.



- 3** Hold pen over second shoe box lid. Pour microbeads or fine-grade glitter over pen to fill in gaps between beads. Turn pen to coat all sides. Gently tap off excess beads. ★

by Brooks Whitney

School Smarts

Ready to jump to the head of the class?
Read on for great ways to **train** your **brain** this year!

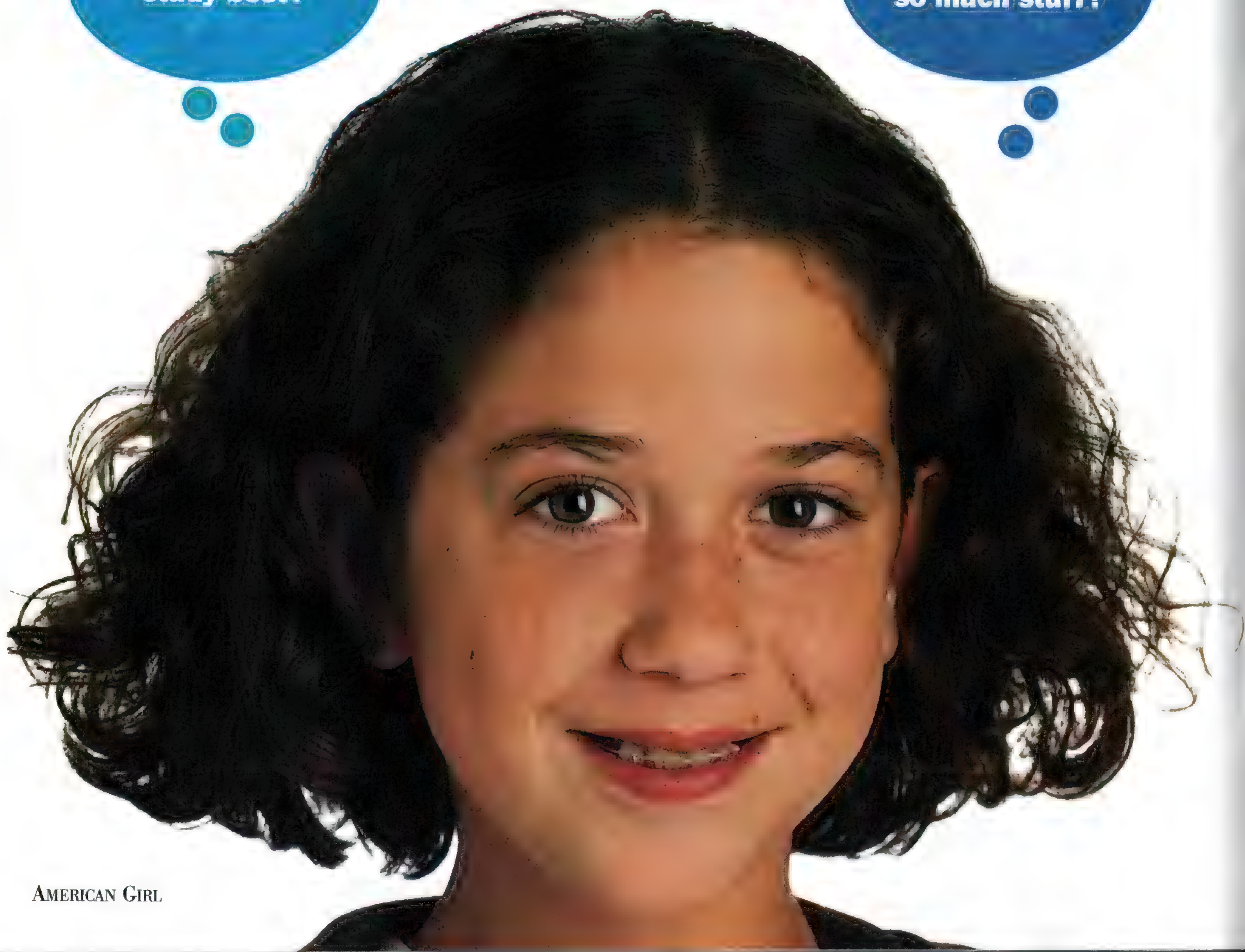
What's the secret
to taking tests?

Hmmm...
How can I do better
in school?

Can homework
be fun?

How do I
study best?

How can I remember
so much stuff?




What's Your Study Style?

What do your homework habits reveal about you?
Take this quiz to find out!

1. You study **best**...

- a. Always at your desk.
- b. Lounging on your bed.
- c. Anywhere.

What your answer might mean:

- a. You think best when things are the same. You love order!
- b. You like to be comfy while getting the work done.
- c. Nothing will  you from doing what you have to do.

2. When studying for a test, you tackle...

- a. The easy stuff first.
- b. The hard stuff first.

What your answer might mean:

- a. You like to ease into things slowly and build up speed.
- b. You're not afraid to dive right in.

3. You prefer to work for...

- a. Long stretches of time.
- b. Short bursts of time.

What your answer might mean:

- a. You have great concentration.
- b. You keep things interesting by changing your focus often.

4. You like to study...

- a. After school.
- b. Before going to bed.

What your answer might mean:

- a. You like knowing everything's done. Whew!
- b. You're a night owl. You focus best when the day has settled.

5. You concentrate best...

- a. When it's quiet.
- b. With music or the TV on.

What your answer might mean:

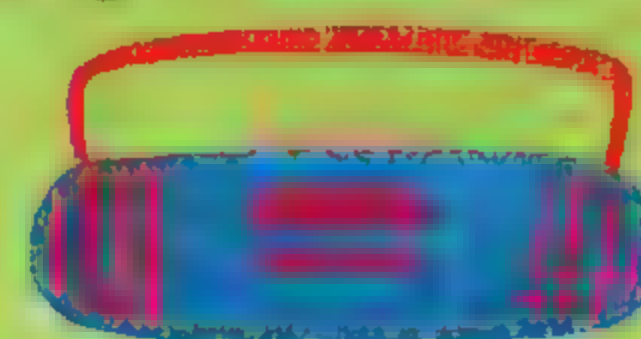
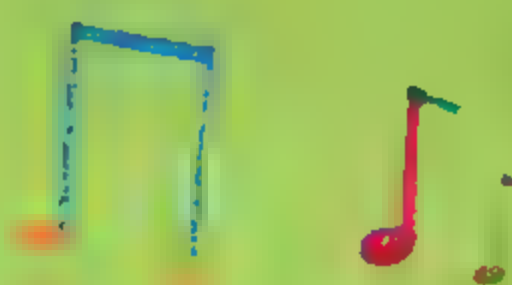
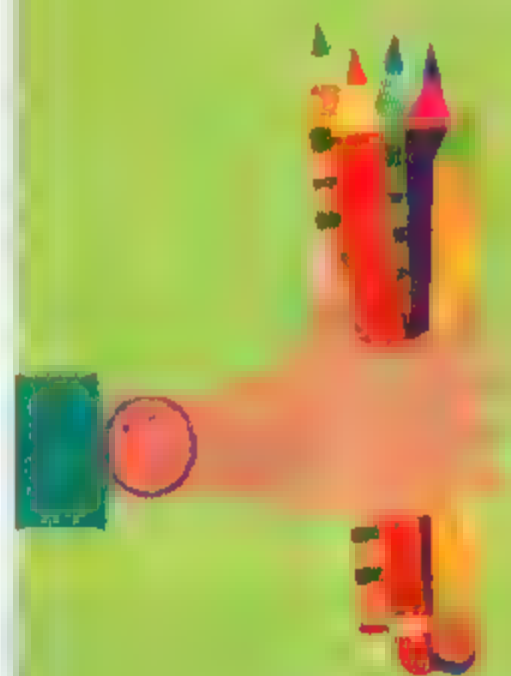
- a. You like to focus on one thing at a time.
- b. Background noise helps you whistle while you work.

6. You like to study...

- a. With a friend.
- b. Alone.

What your answer might mean:

- a. You like to bounce ideas and questions off others.
- b. You focus better when you're not distracted by others.



Learn

It!

These **tricks** make facts **stick**.

Post It

Write key facts on Post-it notes. Stick them where you'll see them throughout the day—on your mirror, on the fridge, even inside your lunch bag.

cirrus



stratus

cumulus



Link It

Link words or information you're trying to learn with something you know.

~~insect~~
the size of my bedroom



Predict It

Ask yourself: "If I were the teacher, what questions would I put on the test?" Write your questions down—and answer them!

Say It

Try to summarize what you've read in your own words. If you can't, read it again.

Shorten It

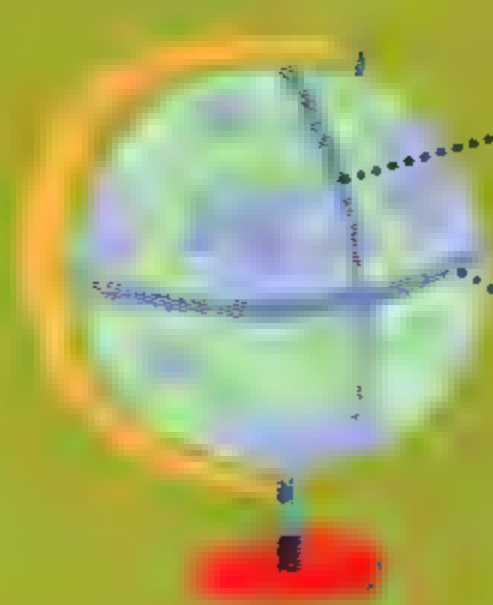
Use memory devices like acronyms to help you remember lists or facts.

HOMES = the five Great Lakes
Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior



Picture It

Visualize what you're learning. For example, to remember the difference between latitude and longitude lines, picture a globe.



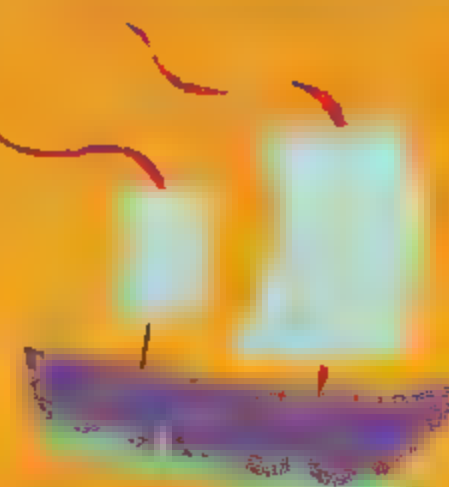
longitude lines go up and down

latitude lines go across

Rhyme It

Use catchy rhymes or phrases to help with facts or spelling words and rules.

In 1492,
Columbus
sailed the
ocean blue.



Stay Sharp!

Try these test-taking tips.



Stumped?

Here's how to tackle different types of tests.

~~A, B, or C?~~

Look for the best answer by eliminating the choices you *know* are wrong.

Drawing a _____?

Write something down, even if it's just the first part of the math equation or half of the essay. You might get partial credit.

True or ~~False?~~

Read each statement carefully. Don't be fooled by a sentence that is only partly true.

ESSay Question?

Look for key words, such as *list* or *compare*, that tell you what is wanted in your essay, and underline them. Then start writing!

Make It Fun!

Try these wacky ways to rev up homework.



Eat your words.

Practice your spelling with alphabet cereal. If you spell the word correctly, you get to eat it!



Be a star. Liven up reading assignments. Pretend you're a movie actress reciting your lines.



Roll the dice.

Add them together to see which homework question you should do next. $4 + 3 =$ question #7.

Give me an A.

Grab a friend and play Hangman with spelling words.



Make a tape.

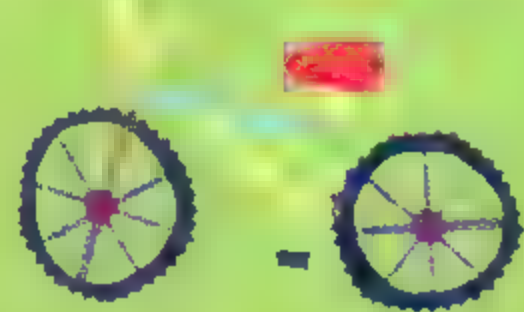
Record important facts in your reading assignment. To review, just rewind and listen.



More Homework Help

Get away!

If you get stuck, work on something else for 15 minutes or so. Then try again.



Talk it out.

Try teaching the lesson to someone else, like a brother or a parent. Chances are it'll begin to make more sense to you.



Slow down.

Read the material again—only slower this time.



Look!

Check your notes from class. Also, look back over the assignment—the answer to #8 may help you with #9.



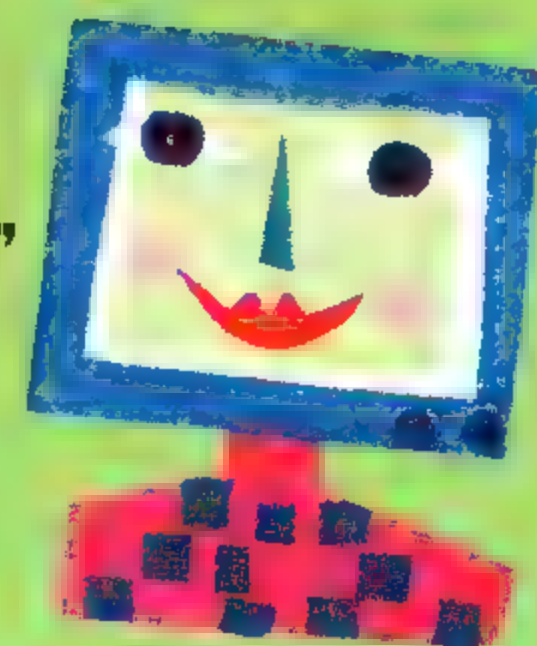
Hello, operator.

Call a homework hot line. Ask your teacher to recommend one in your area.



Plug in.

Check out "School Smarts" at www.americangirl.com for more great tips! ★



Tricky Treat

We asked girls to invent a Halloween board game.
Play the winning entry and you'll howl with laughter!

You will need:

- 2 or more players
- Bag of Halloween candy
- Different game piece for each player, such as a penny, button, or bottle cap
- Die or spinner



How to play:

- 1** Give each player 5 pieces of candy. Place the rest of the candy on the ghost's mouth.
- 2** Place the game pieces on the **"Boo!" square**. Take turns rolling the die. The player who rolls the highest number goes first.
- 3** To start, the first player rolls the die and moves her game piece clockwise that number of squares. She then follows the directions on the square she lands on. Take turns rolling the die and moving your game pieces.
- 4** **"Trick" or "Treat" squares:** If you land on a "Trick" square, roll the die and move *back* that many spaces. On "Treat" squares, roll the die and move *ahead* that many spaces. **"Give up candy" squares:** Place 1 of your candy pieces back on the ghost's mouth. **"Take candy" squares:** Collect 1 piece from the ghost.
- 5** The first player to go around the board and land *exactly* on the "Boo!" square wins. If you don't land exactly on the "Boo!" square, keep going around the board, and take 1 piece of candy from the ghost's mouth as you pass "Boo!" The first player who lands on "Boo!" goes to the ghost's mouth and claims the candy as her prize!

Meet the Winner

Cordelia McDougall, 11, of Arizona designed our prizewinning game.

"My friends and I make spooky noises when we go trick-or-treating," she says. "I thought it would be fun to have players make silly sounds in a board game." Cordelia's drawings inspired our artist's scary scenes.



Honorable Mention

Your entries were so creative, we wish we could show them all! Here are the runners-up:

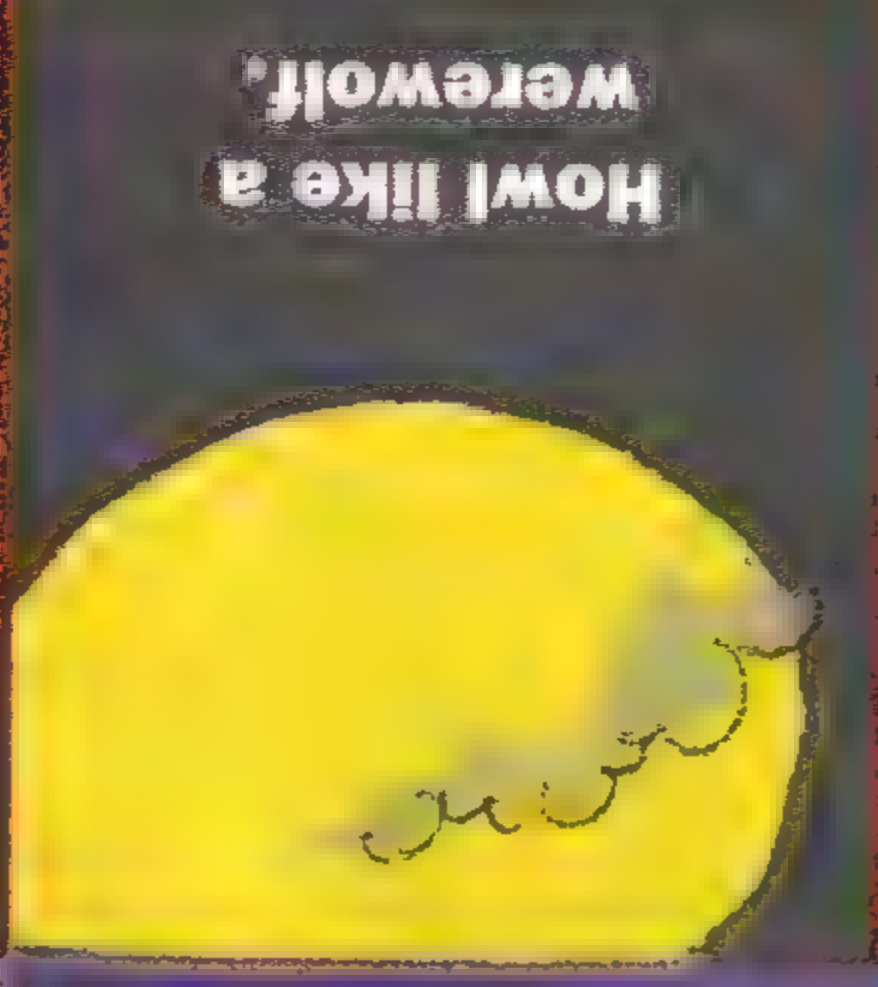




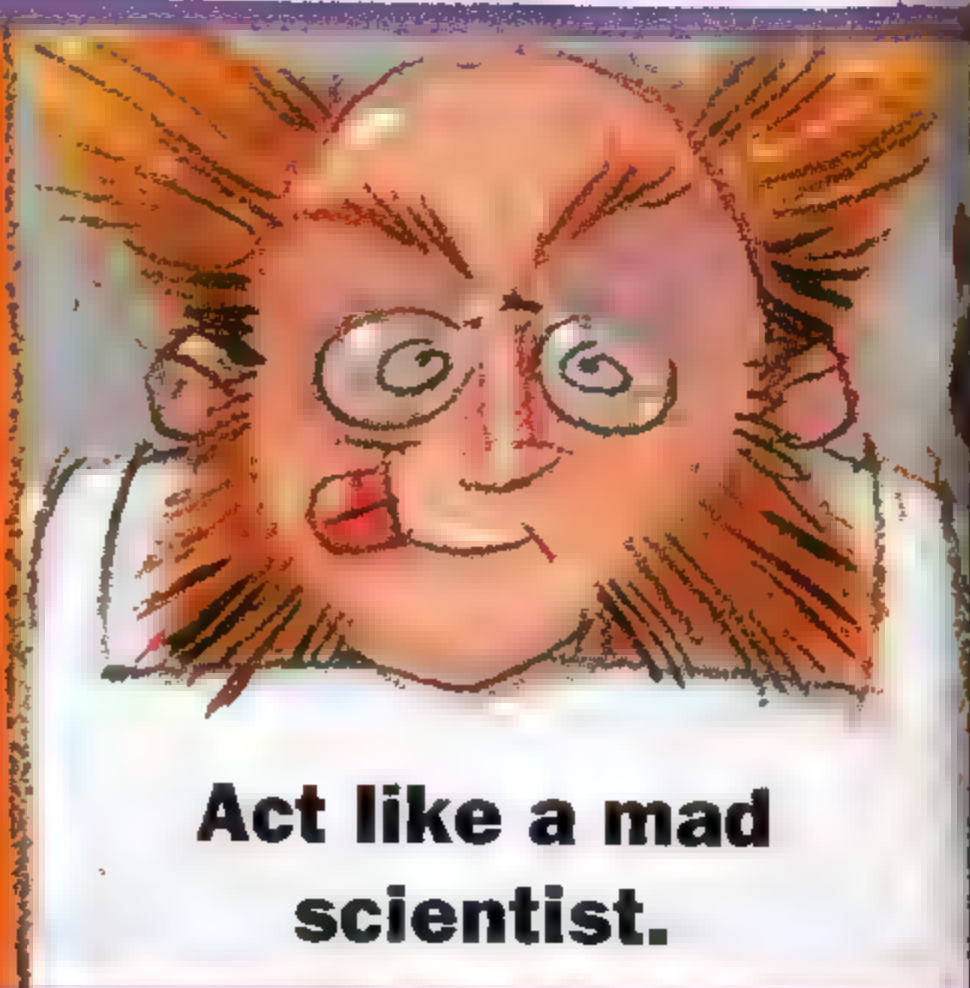
Snarl like a mad dog.



You tripped over a pumpkin.
Give up 1 piece of candy.



Howl like a werewolf.



Act like a mad scientist.

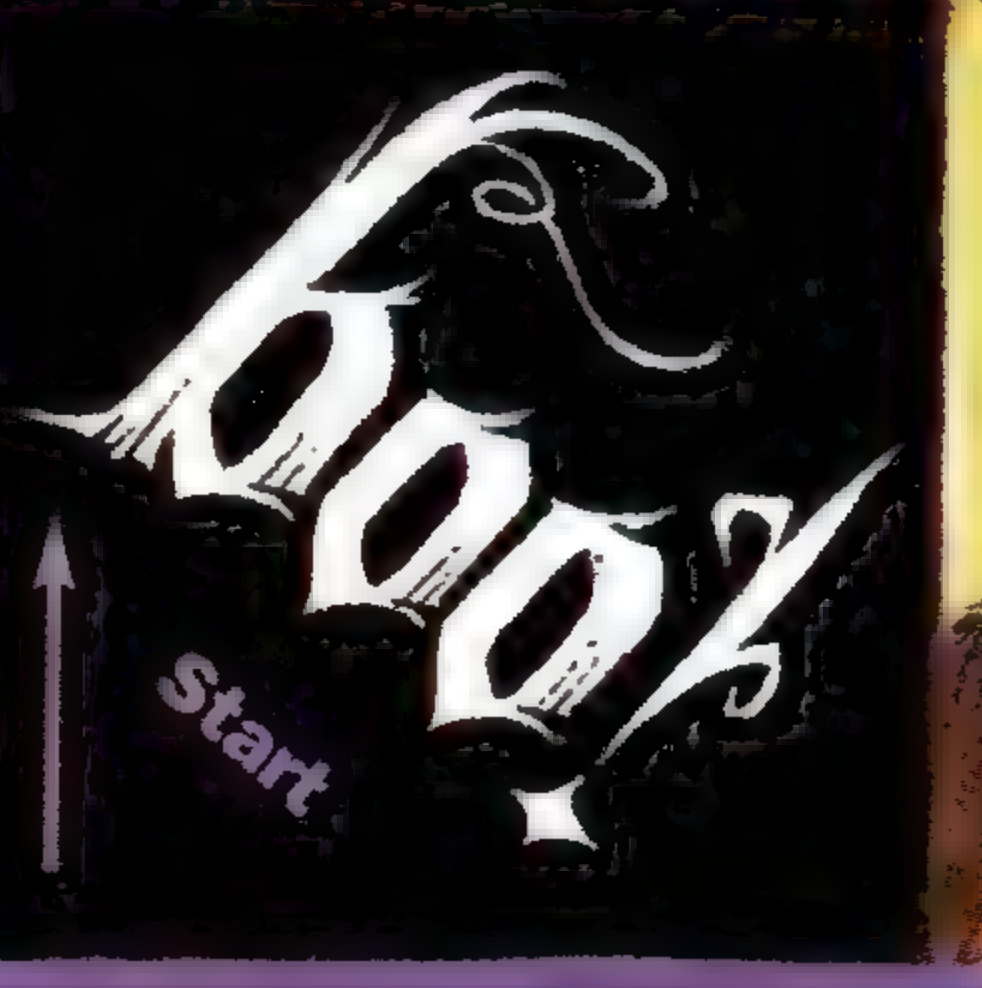


A bat flew over your head!

Give up 1 piece of candy.



Walk like Frankenstein.



Hoot like an owl.



You offered to bring your little brother along.
Take 1 piece of candy.



Groan like a monster.



Hiss like a cat.

Moan like
a ghost.

Trick

Your costume
looks great!
Take 1 piece
of candy.

Grin like a
jack-o'-lantern.



Trick

THE HALLOWEEN GAMES

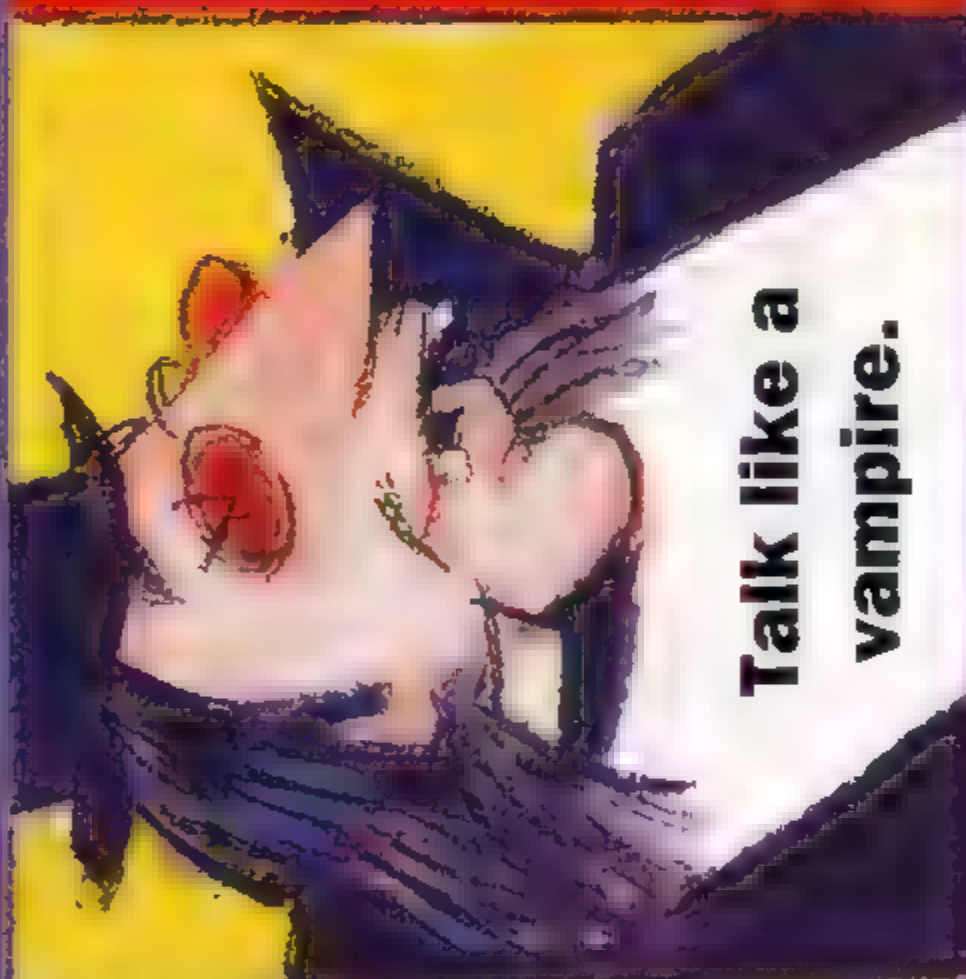
by Cordelia McDougall



You lost your mask.



Give up 1 piece
of candy.



Trick

Dingdong—your
neighbor's home!



Take 1 piece
of candy.



Trick



Spare Part

See what you can spy with a third eye! Use face paint to draw an extra eyeball. (Test the face paint on the inside of your wrist first.) Add a self-stick false eyelash for an extra-real look.

Witchy Wart

What's a witch without a wart? Dab a little corn syrup on a piece of puffed cereal, like Corn Pops, and stick it in an obvious spot!

Halloween

Frighten your friends with

Frightful Fingers

Start with fake fingernails made for kids to create these spook-tacular designs. You can buy colored nails (Fing'rs brand makes them in black and orange) or paint plain fake nails with acrylic paint or polish.



Glue on Googly Goblin eyes.



Glue cotton and a plastic spider on dark nails.



Glue on string whiskers and felt ears. Paint face.




Use black marker to write letters.



Paint candy corn stripes.

Ghoulerly

 This jewelry glows when the lights go out! Knead a piece of glow-in-the-dark Sculpey polymer clay until it is soft. Squish it into a ghost shape. Make eyes and a mouth with a toothpick. Bend a piece of wire into a U, and stick it into the top of the ghost as a hanger. With an adult's help, bake the ghost according to the package directions. Let cool. Thread ghost on a cord with a few beads.

Scream Ring

This eight-legged ring is a cinch to make. Thread half of a black pipe cleaner through the loop of a button. Twist the ends of the pipe cleaner around your finger or toe to make a ring. Glue pieces of black string to the button for legs. Cut a round piece of felt and glue it on top of the legs. Add googly eyes. Put on the ring and get the creeps!

Head to Toe

these odds and ends!



S-s-s-s-s-s spider!

Show your spider style! Thread a large button with a loop onto the middle of a pipe cleaner. Glue a large black pom-pom on the top of the button. Glue on a smaller pom-pom for a head. Glue pieces of black pipe cleaners to the pom-pom for legs. Let dry. Twist the pipe cleaner around a ponytail, and try to act natural!

Peek-a-BOO!

Wear these hair snaps, and all eyes will be on you! Glue googly eyes or plastic spiders to large snaps from the fabric store. Let dry. Snap them in your hair, then look out!

Best-Tressed

Any ghou! would be proud to wear this hair! Use safety pins to attach long strands of yarn or rope to the inside of a hat. Pin your own hair up and show off your new 'do.



Buggy Bangle

Wear this with your frightful frippery! Tie a knot at one end of an 18-inch piece of elastic cord. Thread on a few beads. Tie on a plastic ant.

(Find them at toy and party stores.) Repeat pattern until beaded cord fits around your ankle. Tie the ends of the elastic together.



Hair Scare

Give creepy crawlies a home in your hair! Pull apart cotton balls to make spiderwebs. Use tape to stick the webs inside big Velcro hair rollers. Glue plastic spiders in the webs, and roll up some hair-raising fun!

Spooky Specs

Be the coolest bat on the block! Cut bat wings out of black craft foam. Glue them on the sides of an old pair of sunglasses. Let dry. Now just add a *bat-titude*! ★



School Daze

homework

What is it about homework
That makes me want to write
My Great Aunt Myrt to thank her for
The sweater that's too tight?

What is it about homework
That makes me pick up socks
That stink from days and days of wear,
Then clean the litter box?


What is it about homework
That makes me volunteer
To take the garbage out before
The bugs and flies appear?

What is it about homework
That makes me wash my hair
And take an hour combing out
The snags and tangles there?

What is it about homework?
You know, I wish I knew,
'Cause nights when I've got homework
I've got much too much to do!

—Jane Yolen





Remembering...

"Write a composition,"
said the teacher,
"about something you did
during summer vacation.
Make it two pages long
and neatness counts."

I sat there
remembering the quiet
of the giant redwoods.
Even my little brother
whispered.

"Teacher,
could I write a poem
instead?"

—*Bobbi Katz* ★

I didn't get my spelling done,
My science was a mess,
I totally forgot about
The social-studies test.

Finished only half the math,
My essay was too short,
The baby finger-painted jam
All over my report.

On the bus, I lost my pen,
And when I got in line,
I couldn't find the papers
My parents had to sign.

I gave up hope, went into class,
Shaking in my boots,
And saw the greatest sight on Earth—
A smiling substitute.

—*Carol Diggory Shields*





"The best part of being a twin is always having someone to talk to," says Mary-Kate (left). "And steal clothes from!" adds Ashley.

The Truth About Twins

What's it really like to be a twin? These questions and answers from AG readers will fill you in on the double!



How do twins feel when people mix them up? What are the best ways to tell twins apart?

Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen may be two of America's best-known twins, but they still get called by the wrong names all the time! "We don't get too upset when people who don't know us get us mixed up," says Mary-Kate. "We're used to it." Even though these girls are famous, their problem applies to all twins: people think of them as a matching pair.



"It's annoying after everyone asks who's who and they still don't know which one you are!"

Holly (left) and Haley Steger, age 12, Alabama

wish people would put more effort into telling them apart.

What's the difference between identical twins and fraternal twins?

Identical twins have the same genes, so they look very much alike. Having the same genes also means identical

twins are always both girls or both boys, not one of each.

Identical twins want you to know that they are *not* two copies of the same person. They have different personalities, plus lots of differences on the outside, too. Identical twins can grow at different rates, and they don't have the same freckles, moles, or birthmarks.



Emily (left) and Erin Chancellor, age 13, Oklahoma

AG gets lots of letters from twins. These girls have one big thing in common: they want others to think of them as separate people, not as a single unit. "People don't treat us like individuals," says twin Erin Chancellor. "They think we should do everything together and be like each other."

Twins want you to look for the little differences between them, like freckles and hairstyles. Sometimes it's easy to tell twins apart. Some twins cut their hair different lengths. Sometimes only one twin wears glasses. But in general, twins say they



"People always quiz us on our personalities: who's the loudest, who's this, and who's that."

Theresa Soltesz (left), age 12, Florida, with twin sister Kristina

Every year, twins from all over the country celebrate their "twinhood" at the Twins Days Festival in Twinsburg, Ohio!



Fraternal twins don't have the same genes. They can be two sisters, two brothers, or a sister and a brother. Like other sisters and brothers, it's



"We do not lose teeth at the same time!"

Kelsey (left) and Riley Bernardin, age 11, Florida

not unusual for fraternal twins to look a lot alike. Believe it or not, Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen are fraternal twins! Sometimes, though, fraternal twins don't even look like they're related.

Erin Clair likes having a brother as her twin. "It's great to be a twin—usually." But sometimes people misunderstand what it means to be a fraternal twin. "People ask if my brother Sean and I are identical twins," Erin explains.

How do twins fit into their families?

When it comes to family, twins often say they have a different relationship with each other than with their other sisters and brothers. Twins also say they compete with each other a lot. Some-



"People never seem to understand that being a twin is hard. We have to share more things than other brothers and sisters."

Lauren Hewson (left), age 10, Colorado, with twin sister Mackenzie

times, younger twins even complain about bossy older twins—even though their age difference is probably only a few minutes! Twin sisters Laura and Maddie Fienup don't have to worry about that problem. Their parents won't tell them who was born first. "We don't know which one of us is older," explains Laura, "and my mom and dad won't tell us until we're 18!"



"Our birthdays are usually twice the fun, because we have twice the friends—girls and boys."

Erin Clair, age 11, Arizona, with twin brother Sean

Laura (left) and Maddie Fienup, age 13, Missouri





Julie (left) and Lisa Menezes,
age 12, California

Can twins read each other's minds or feel each other's pain?

Some twins are sure they know what their special sibling is thinking, at least some of the time.

"Ashley can tell things about me—like if something is bothering me," explains Mary-Kate Olsen. "And some people notice that we finish each other's sentences," says Ashley. Lisa Menezes doesn't think twins can read each other's minds. "But often," she says, "my twin Julie and I say stuff at the same time, or we bring up something totally irrelevant that the other twin just happened to be thinking about." Maybe that's because, as Julie Menezes says, the two sisters "tell each other everything!"

Movies and TV always make it seem like twins are best friends. Is that true?

Many twins really are best friends. But since twins have different interests, they often have different friends, too. Starting before they're born, twins spend tons of time together—lots more than other sisters and brothers. Twins are each other's built-in playmates. They often have

the same room at home, and they're usually in the same grade at school. So it's no wonder twins share unique friendships. "Mary-Kate and I are best friends," Ashley explains. "We have shared so much of our lives, how could we not be?"

"You always have someone to play with and someone who understands you."

Elizabeth Kief (left),
age 9, Minnesota

"I like being a twin because we are a special team."

Emmy Kief



Most twins share very close relationships with their special siblings. And in the end, all the "singletons" out there will never really know what it's like to be a twin. Then again, twins can never know what life would be like as a "singleton." "People always ask how it feels to be twins," say Katie and Melanie Allen. "We can't answer. We don't know how it feels not to be twins!" ★



Katie (left) and Melanie Allen,
age 13, Idaho



Looking Back

Spell Check

Since 1925, America's smartest young spellers have put their talent to the test at the National Spelling Bee, now held in Washington, D.C. Take this quirky quiz to see if their winning words spell trouble for you!

1 In 1925, Frank Neuhauser won the first-ever National Spelling Bee with the word *gladiolus* (glad-ee-OH-lus)—the name of a brightly colored flower. That first winner was a boy, but can you guess how many National Spelling Bee champions have been girls?

- A. fewer than half
- B. half
- C. more than half

2 Jean Chappelle spelled *psychiatry* (suh-KIE-uh-tree) to win the bee in 1948. *Psychiatry*, the treatment of mental problems, comes from two Greek words. One of the words means "healing." Can you guess what the other word means?

- A. body
- B. soul
- C. heart

1955



3 The scientific term *crustaceology* (crust-ay-see-OHL-oh-gee) would make most spelling bee contestants clam up—but not Sandra Sloss! She spelled the word to become the champion of 1955. *Crustaceology* is the study of

- A. Earth.
- B. lobsters, shrimps, and crabs.
- C. baking.

1948



1997

Looking Back

4 In **1967**, *Chihuahua* (chuh-WAH-wah) helped Jennifer Reinke become the top dog of spelling. What would you guess the dinky dog breed is named after?

- A. a kind of Mexican food
- B. a large insect native to Mexico
- C. a city in northern Mexico



5 Ooh la la! Libby Childress won the **1970** spelling bee with the word *croissant* (krwa-SON), a flaky, buttery pastry. Which of these is the Old French meaning of the word *croissant*?

- A. the time when the moon is growing from a small sliver to a half-moon
- B. a young, smiling face
- C. buttery bread

6 Rebecca Sealton, champ in **1997**, spelled *euonym* (YEW-uh-nim) to win. If people called her Bouncy Becky, her nickname would be a euonym. What do you suppose her winning word means?

- A. a nickname that rhymes with a person's real name
- B. a name that really fits the person, place, or thing it names
- C. a funny nickname a person makes up for herself

7 George Thampy, the **2000** champ, won with the word *demarche* (DAY-marsh), which means "diplomatic step." George had been in the national bee before. Can you guess how many of this year's 248 spellers were returning to the finals?

- A. 10
- B. 22
- C. 51

Answers:

1. **C.** Girls have outspelled boys! Of all the National Spelling Bee champs, 42 have been girls and 34 have been boys.
2. **B.** In ancient Greek, *psyche* is the word for "soul."
3. **B.** *Crustaceology* is the study of *crustaceans*, or shellfish.
4. **C.** *Chihuahua* is the name of a northern Mexican city.
5. **A.** The Old French word *croissant* refers to the time when the moon is *waxing*, or growing, in the sky.
6. **B.** A *euonym* is a name that fits the person, place, or thing it names.
7. **C.** Forty of this year's competitors were second-time finalists, and **11**, including George, were finalists for the third time!

Want to enter next year's spelling bee? Call your local newspaper to see if it sponsors a competition in your area. Or you can check out www.spellingbee.com, the official Web site of the Scripps Howard National Spelling Bee. ★

The Giggle Gang



Double Take

On the first day of school, Margaret thought she was seeing double. That's because all the other kids in her new class are identical twins! Can you find the matching faces in this mixed-up classroom? Look for 11 sets of twins. Try to find Margaret, too. She's the only girl without a twin.



What's yellow and a whiz at math? A banana with a calculator!

Mandy Moore

What did the bull use when he needed help with his math homework? A cow-calculator.

Rachel Booth
Age 12, Massachusetts

Why don't monsters eat clowns? Because they taste funny!

Mary Hawthorne
Age 13, Pennsylvania

Which vampire likes to cook?

All answers on page 42.

Very Scary Wordy-Gurdy

This puzzle's a scream for Halloween time! Just answer each clue with two words that rhyme. Choose from the words in the book of spells, or you'll be haunted by howls and yells!

1. a fluffy feline

fat cat

2. a spirit's salute

ghost toast
witch switch

3. a magic-girl mix-up

vampire campfire

4. where Dracula
roasts marshmallows

5. a daddy longlegs's
apple drink

spider cider

6. easy-to-reach sweets

handy condy

7. an embalmed idiot

mummy dummy
night flight

8. a bedtime broom ride



Magic Moves

Try these tricks with your friends. They'll be amazed at what they *can't* do!

Tell a friend you can make
her foot stick to the floor!

Have your friend lean against a wall with her head and the side of her body touching the wall. Have her place her outside foot one step away from the wall. Ask her to lift her outside leg. She won't be able to! She'd need to shift her weight over her inside leg, but the wall stops her.



Tell a friend you can make
her stay in her seat with a
single finger!

Have your friend sit up straight in a chair. Gently press your index finger onto her forehead. Then ask her to get up. She won't be able to! She'd need to bend forward to get up from the chair, but your finger stops her.



Why didn't the skeleton cross the road? He didn't have the guts! *Gasmine Jankin* Age 13, Hawaii
Which bone is the funniest bone in the body? The humerus! *Haylee McCoy* Age 12, Indiana

What event did the vampire win at her school's swim meet? The bat-stroke! *Elizabeth Dorr*

Age 12, Virginia

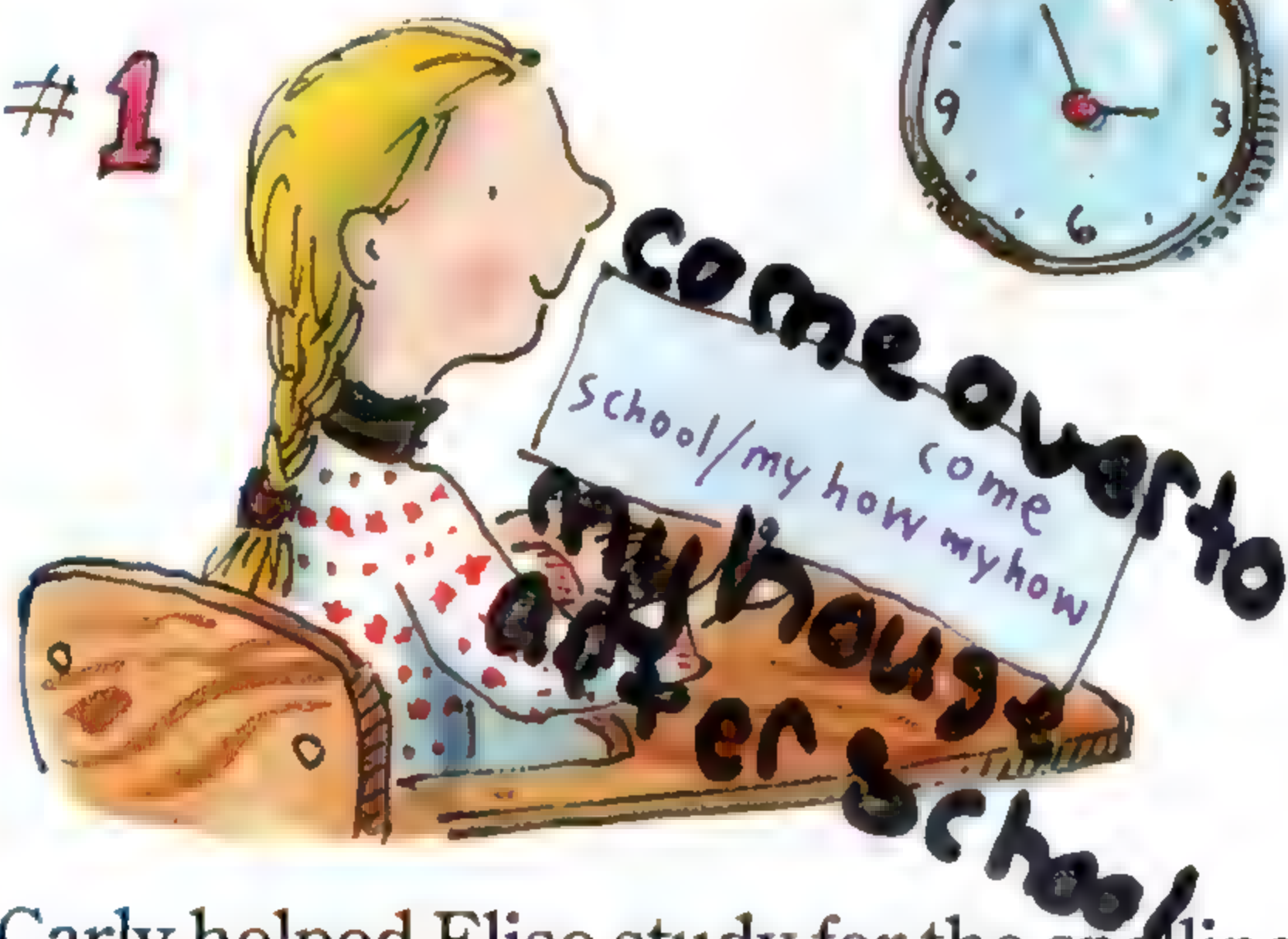
Age 10, Ohio

The Giggle Gang

Nonsense Notes

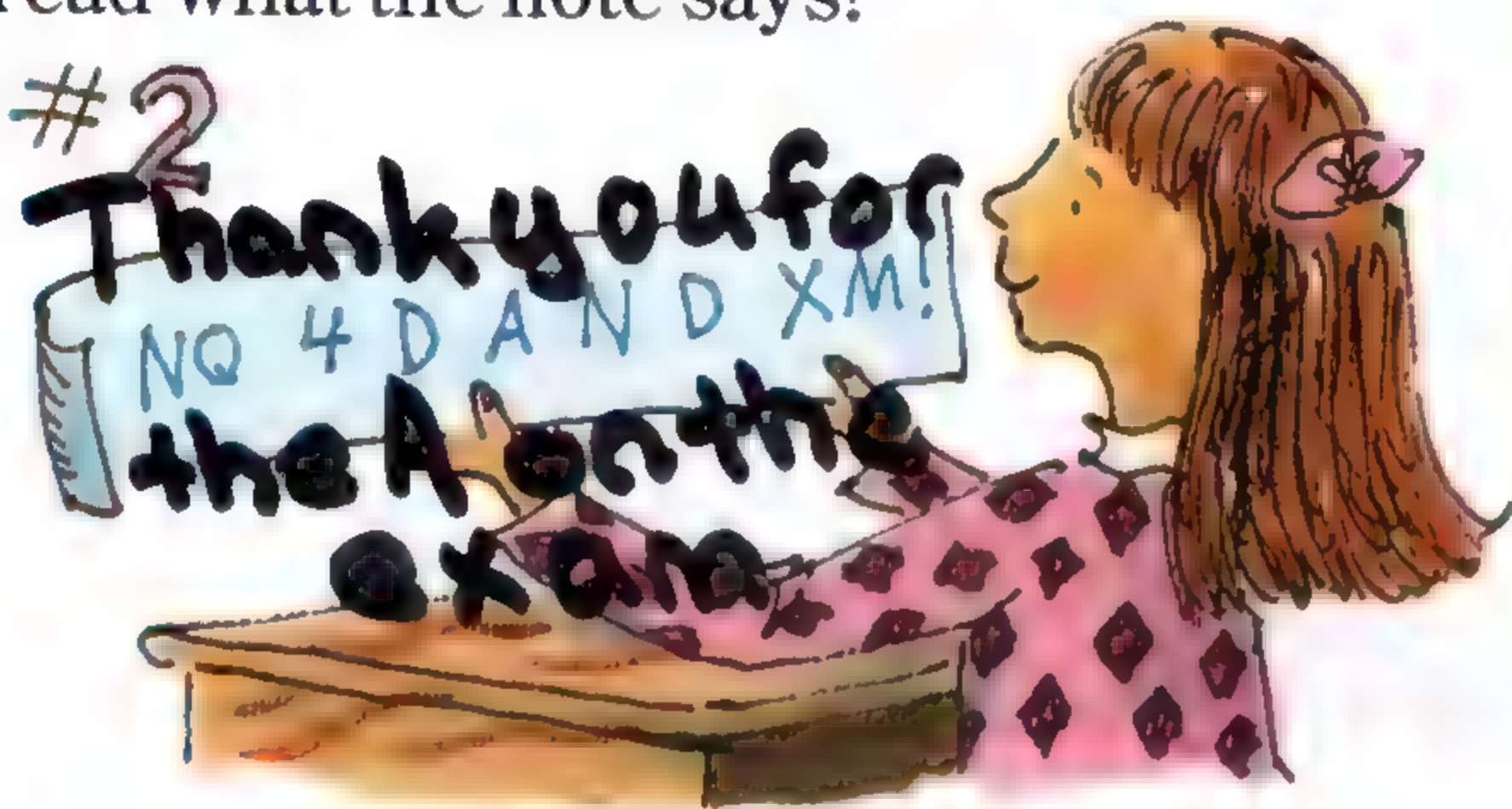
During study hall, Sarah passed this note to her friend Sage. Sage read the note, smiled, and said, "Sure!" Can you figure out what the note asks Sage to do?

#1



Carly helped Elise study for the spelling test. When Elise got her test back—with a good grade!—she sent a nice note to Carly. Can you figure out Elise's silly spelling and read what the note says?

#2



AG Code

Use the decoder to unscramble the answer to this riddle from Pia Walker, age 11, of New York.



What school subject is every witch's favorite?

SPELLING! 

New Code Contest!

Got an idea for a new AG code? We'd love to see it! Send your new code and decoder to the address on page 2. We'll use some of your ideas starting in the March/April 2001 issue—so don't keep this code contest a secret!



Answer Box

Nonsense Notes: 1. Come over to my house after school. 2. Read the letters and numbers aloud and the note sounds like, "Thank you for the A on the exam!"
AG Code: Spelling!
The buzzword, trippery, appears on page 31.

Very Scary Wordy-Gurdy: 1. fat cat, 2. ghost toast, 3. witch switch, 4. vampire campfire, 5. spider cider, 6. handy candy, 7. mummy dummy, 8. night flight



How far away should you stay from a werewolf? As far away as you can get!

Jessica Oberstling

What does King Arthur use to see in the dark? A knight light.

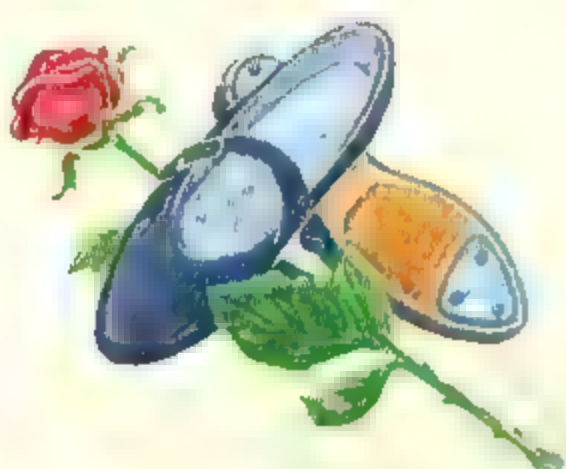
Kate Sick
Age 13, New York

What do construction workers and students have in common? They both need to pay attention to the board!

Hannah Garrido
Age 12, California
What's the difference between a teacher and a train? A teacher says, "Chew, chew!"
A train says, "Spit out your gum."
Amelia Wilkison
Age 12, Wyoming

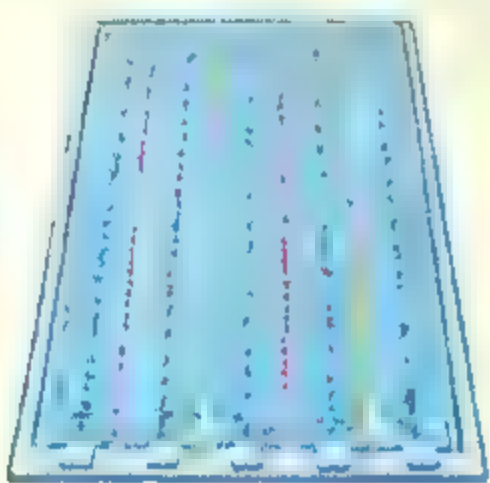
Who's That Girl?

Here's an American girl of yesterday. Read the clues about her and guess who she is now.



Clue 1

When I was six, I began taking dance classes. I liked tap dance the most because I could make neat noises with my feet! At recitals, I often got nervous, so I had to watch my classmates to remember my steps.



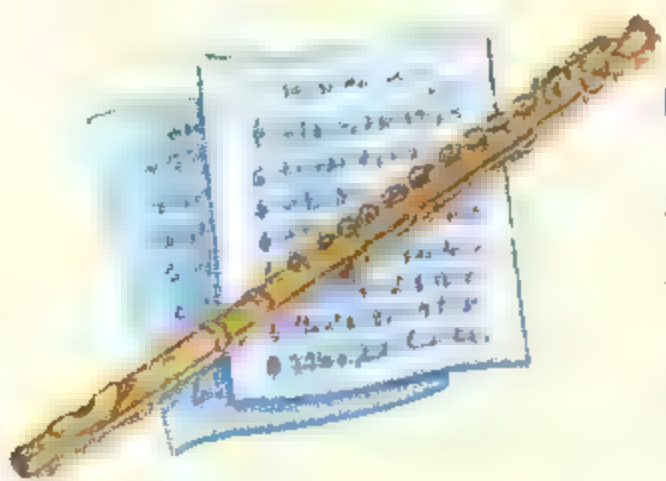
Clue 2

At age seven, I tried out for the swim team, but I didn't make it. I spent the next year practicing my strokes, and by age eight, I was a member of the team!



Clue 3

As a girl, I loved to watch *The Muppet Show* on TV. I was a big fan of Miss Piggy's because she had such a no-nonsense attitude about life and she *always* got her way.



Clue 4

In sixth grade, I joined the school band because many of my friends were joining, too. I played the flute, but since I never practiced, I was never very good. But I had a lot of fun with my friends!

Jenny Thompson



Here I am at age ten.



Clue 5

I collected lots of swim caps by trading with other swimmers I knew. My favorite was an orange Florida Sunkist cap. I never used the caps because I wanted to keep them in perfect condition.

Take a guess!

When this American girl grew up, she became:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a rock star | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> an Olympic swimmer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a puppeteer | <input type="checkbox"/> a dancer |

Turn the page and find out if you're right!

She's Jenny Thompson



This September, swimmer Jenny Thompson hopes to strike gold! She wants to win her first gold medals in the individual freestyle and butterfly events at the Olympics in Australia.

But at age seven, Jenny's first try at making a summer swim team wasn't good enough. "I didn't have the strokes down right, so I didn't make the team," Jenny recalls. Her hopes didn't sink with her disappointment, though. She took lots of lessons that year to improve her skills, and by the next summer, Jenny was a member of the team.

At 14, Jenny had even earned a spot on the

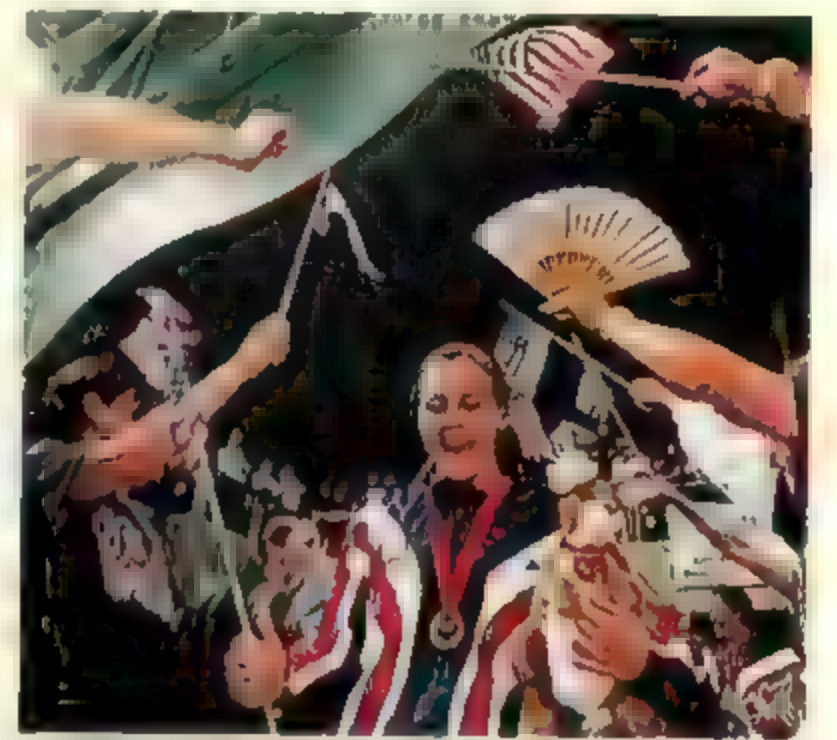
Jenny's advice to American girls:

"There's so much to gain from sports, even if you don't go to the Olympics. Being active in a sport can really help you feel good about yourself."

Jenny Thompson

U.S. National swim team—an honor reserved for U.S. swimmers who rank in the top eight in the world for their event. Since then, Jenny has made that elite team a record 13 times straight!

This past year, Jenny broke several world records. But a new record can't compare to winning an Olympic event. "I've never felt a greater rush," Jenny says about previous Olympics where she's won six medals for relay events.



Jenny walks through a crowd of supporters.

"As I walked into the stadium, thousands of cameras were flashing and zillions of people were screaming. It was great!"

Jenny says she grows from each experience, even when things don't go her way. "My mom taught me to learn from my mistakes," Jenny says, "and then try and make it better the next time." It's a lesson that's brought her waves of success! ★

You can write to Jenny
c/o U.S. Swimming
One Olympic Plaza
Colorado Springs, CO
80909-5770



Photo credits on page 2.

After the Olympics, Jenny will begin medical school to become a doctor!



Mini Mag

With the Mini Mag, you can make a miniature copy of *American Girl*. All you need are scissors and a stapler. Read the directions all the way through before you begin.

1 Cut out each pair of pages only on the dotted lines. Be sure to cut around the tabs marked with the letters A, B, C, and D.



2 Stack the pages on top of one another in the order shown below, with the letters on the tabs facing up.



Continued

Mini Mag

3 Fold the stack of pages in half along the solid line in the center. The cover of the magazine should now be on top. Run your fingernail down the folded edge to help the pages lie flat.



4 Open the folded stack. Staple along the center line. Cut off the tabs, and you're done!



HELP!

Dear American Girl,

There is a girl I know who is twice my size. Because she's big and I'm small, she feels she has the power to lift me up whenever she wants to. She does the same thing to my friend. We said "STOP!" but she won't listen.
Small in New Jersey

This girl is a bully, simple as that. But even though you're small, you can stick up for yourself. Next time you see her, say, "I don't like it when you pick me up. If you don't stop, I'll get an adult to stop you." Your words will have more impact when you've got both feet on the ground! If she tries to pick you up anyway, pretend you're made of noodles, and slide to the ground. She probably won't be able to pick you up, and her fun will be gone. If she tries again, keep your word and tell an adult.



Dear American Girl,

My school friends are going to a different middle school than I am. I'm just afraid I'll be sitting alone at lunch all the time. Help!
Middle School Blues



Here's the good news: middle schools are loaded with kids just like you. During the first few days of school, sit with kids you meet in class, on the bus, or in the lunch line. Got nothing to say? Ask questions. Most people love to talk about themselves. And remember, middle school is also loaded with ways to make new friends. Join a club. Play a sport. Write for the newspaper. Soon you'll have no lunchtime worries.



Dear American Girl,

Today I cheated on a test, and this one meant a big grade on my report card. I can't tell my parents because they're going to tell me to tell my teacher, and she gets mad really easily.
A Cheater

The guilt you're feeling now is going to stay with you a long time if you keep this to yourself. So take a deep breath and tell your teacher—yourself. Chances are, your teacher will get less upset—and respect you more—if she hears the truth directly from you. If your teacher decides to get your parents involved, they, too, will probably feel a little better knowing that you had the courage to try to make this situation right by yourself. Good luck.



Dear American Girl,

My friend's dad just died. I want to make her feel better, but I don't know how.

Not sure how to help
Just letting your friend know you care will help. Write her a note filled with your favorite memories of her dad. She may want to talk about her dad, or she may not. Let her know you're there for her either way. Keep inviting her to do fun things, but don't feel bad if she doesn't seem like her old self. It will take a long time, but someday she'll feel better, and so will you.

MORE HELP!

Dear American Girl,

My mom packs weird stuff in my lunch. All my friends get junk food and think I'm strange, so I don't eat my lunch. Then I'm hungry later. What should I do?

Uncomfortable

Maybe you can start packing your own lunches. But don't be tempted to load up on junk food. Take a trip to the grocery store with your mom and pick out great-tasting—and healthy—foods you can agree on. You don't have to stick to sandwiches, either. Try a salad, pasta, or even veggies with dip. An insulated lunch bag with cold packs will keep everything cool and crisp. With a little bit of planning, you'll have a lunch you love, and Mom will be happy, too.



Dear American Girl,

I decided it would be fun to have a Halloween party for my birthday. The problem: one of my best friends does not celebrate Halloween. I do not want to exclude her, but I know if I invite her, she probably won't have fun.

No birthday



You're a good friend to think about this girl's feelings. But which means more to you: a Halloween party or sharing your birthday with your friend? (Remember, it's *your* birthday!) If Halloween fun's your answer, find another way to celebrate with your friend. If you decide no party's fun if your friend doesn't have a good time, ditch the witches and pick a less spooky theme.



Dear American Girl,

I love cheerleading. I wanted to be captain more than anything. When the day came to choose the captain, I had the biggest smile on my face. But I wasn't chosen! I still had the smile, but I could *hear* my heart break.

Sadder Every Second

Not being chosen as captain must hurt, but it doesn't mean you can't be an awesome cheerleader. Try this: Think about all the reasons why you loved to cheer in the first place—long before you ever dreamed of becoming captain. Now try to focus on the fun while keeping a great attitude and team spirit. In time, your heart will mend and you'll prove to everybody that you've got what it takes to be a top cheerleader—officially or not.



Advice from You

"Keep a bottle of bubbles in your room, and blow some when you're feeling down. I tried it, and the bubbles really cheered me up!"

Kirsten & Indrelee
Age 11, Minnesota

Need advice? Got advice? Write:
Help!

AmericanGirl

8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

Shining Stars



When Kaitlin and Emilie Thompson were asked to help raise money for their local Easter Seals Rehab Center, they wanted to do all they could. The 14-year-old Indiana twins visit the center weekly for help with cerebral palsy, a disability that affects their muscles. "We've gone there since we were babies," says Kaitlin. "The people there do a lot for us."

To raise money for the center,

Kaitlin and Emilie set up a lemonade stand in their yard. To their surprise, nearly 100 customers showed up. In one day, the girls raised more than \$250!

But Kaitlin and Emilie didn't stop there. Each year they now hold their "LemonAid Stand" in the lobby of the rehab center. Along with gallons of lemonade, the girls and their helpers sell crafts, home-baked treats—even hot

dogs and burgers. They've raised more than \$4,000!

Making their stand a success takes months of hard work. Kaitlin and Emilie make fancy bracelets, magnets, and other crafts to sell. They call on friends to donate everything from cups to cupcakes. This year, Emilie even invited a TV news crew!

Kaitlin and Emilie plan to have their LemonAid Stand again next year. "People like

to help out," says Kaitlin. "You just have to ask."

Do you have a friend who really shines as a volunteer? Maybe you're a star volunteer yourself. Write to us at the address on page 2 and tell us about the shining stars you know! Each girl we honor receives an official certificate and a sparkly star pendant—and AG will donate \$500 to her cause. ★

Emma Morrison



SOCCEER

AmericanGirl®

Coming up in the November/December issue

Babysitting—Are You Ready?

Take our quiz and find out!

Holiday Sparkle!

Great glittery gift ideas

The Newest American Girl

Will hard times pull Kit's family apart?

Plus:

The winners of our poetry contest!